DOING FAMILY: COMMUNICATING MEMORIES OF THE JAPANESE AMERICAN INCARCERATION

by

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STATEMENT OF THESIS APPROVAL

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ABSTRACT

While official government photographs from the Incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II has received scholarly attention, private photographs from the Incarceration are also valuable to the reconstruction of personal Camp memories. Using my family's photographs, I conducted oral history interviews with 5 family members who were incarcerated at Topaz or Amache Camps. My thesis employs a performance studies lens in order to better understand the relationship between memory, identity, agency, and photographs. My approach recognizes that memory, identity, and agency are complex ongoing processes, which are informed by, and inform, one another.

In all, through purposeful acts of forgetting in the oral history interviews, my relatives were able to (re)conceive their Camp experiences in ways that fit their present needs. For example, in remembering to forget, the Nisei are able to construct a memory of the Camp experience that supports their identities as Japanese Americans by reinforcing their identity as an American through the depoliticization of Camp memories. Additionally, in order to better make sense of the relationship between photographs and the memory construction process, I provided a binder of family photographs from the Camps for the interviewees to view. My analysis suggests that photographs in the oral history performance are used as a prop that allows for acts of both remembering and forgetting while embracing the fragmented nature of memories.

Overall, this study reveals the relationship between identity and memory with implications on how this interaction allows us to remember, forget, or remain silent. In my attempt to understand how my relatives' constructed memories of their Incarceration, I was able to reflect on my own experiences as a Japanese Chinese American. To this end, memories are not only about what is remembered, they are also about how what is forgotten and what is remembered reinforce and are reinforced by identity.

To my family

and all people who are

surviving (or have survived)

being confined or silenced by their identities

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Encountering Difference and Myself as the Other

There are Moments that interrupt our lives, Moments that rupture our sense of who we are. As I sat in an undergraduate course on American Schools, I felt like the epitome of belonging. Each day, I walked into class and took my seat at the same table. It was a table that was marked by even more belonging; my table was always filled with my sorority sisters. Then one day, wrapped up in my security of belonging to a table in a class surrounded by my sorority sisters, I was asked to move. I was not asked to leave the classroom; instead, I was asked to move tables. I was asked to move to a table where I belonged. I was asked to move from a table where I did not belong.

On this particular day, the professor decided to divide the class into two groups: White students and non-White students. In "our" groups, we were instructed to talk about racism. I remember first being caught off guard when I was told I had to get up from my table to move to another one, and then embarrassed when I realized I was asked to move because I was not White. Beyond that, the combination of anger and embarrassment resulted in some form of amnesia. I do not remember a word that was spoken between me and the other male in my group, nor do I remember what was said in the class discussion. All I can remember is sitting at a table with another male student who also happened to be Japanese. We had nothing in common—no mutual friends,

different majors, he grew up in Hawaii, me in California. The only attribute that brought the two of us together at this table was our lack of Whiteness. For the rest of that day, I tried to figure out what bothered me so much about the exercise.

It turns out there were many things that bothered me, but the most useful revelation I had was that I was not angry because I was not part of the White group and I was not embarrassed because the professor singled me out to move; rather, I was somehow blindsided by the recognition that others saw me as different in some way. You see, during my high school years in California, my high school was diverse in every way possible in terms of religion, ethnicity, sexuality, nationality, etc. I thought about race and ethnicity often in class discussions and readings, yet I never had to think about my own race or ethnicity. I never reflected about my own identity as a Chinese Japanese American, and no one forced me to. While culturally I participated in Japanese and Chinese family cultural traditions, I always felt like I fit in relatively seamlessly with "Americans." For me, to be American meant to be able to enjoy the rights ensured to me by our constitution—freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and the pursuit of happiness. Identifying myself as American never had anything to do with race; it was more a state of mind and a matter of citizenship.

On the other hand, my racial self-concept was always a fluid one. At times I felt more Japanese than Chinese, at others I felt more Chinese than Japanese, and there were even times when I felt more American than anything else. In most cases, I thought I had control over my ethnic identity. When surrounded by my Dad's family, I feel Japanese. When I am with my Mom's family, I feel Chinese. So really, there was nothing inherently disturbing to me about being identified as non-White; instead, I think the

painful part of the class activity was that someone else was telling me who I was without my consent. When the professor told me I needed to move tables, his order was in conflict with how I felt in that Moment. I was made blatantly aware of my visibility as a person of color, and I was not quite sure what this meant or how I was suppose to handle it. So, for weeks I walked around Campus being aware that in some way others might see me as not belonging.

In that same semester, in that same class, we had a discussion about the pledge of allegiance and we were encouraged to share our opinions on requiring students to recite it in public schools. A couple students raised issue with the use of the word God in the pledge, and the class nodded and grunted in consensus, but as I sat there, I realized that my issue was not with the use of the word God; instead, it was with the line "and freedom and justice for all." I do not believe that this country provides freedom and justice for all at the level espoused, so I do not think students should be groomed to believe that the United States is a perfect country that provides justice for all. In my mind, I knew exactly what I wanted to say, but I was not sure if I wanted to raise my hand. I worried what the other students would think and whether or not it would make me even more different from them. In the end, I timidly raised my hand and reluctantly shared my opinion.

At the time, these two experiences in that one class bothered me, but why, I never really worked out. As I reflect on my own opinions on the Incarceration experience of the Japanese side of my family, a portion of my feelings come from a feeling of empathy. While the Japanese side of my family *is* Japanese, they are *also* American. Much like myself, my great aunts, great uncles, and my grandparents saw themselves as Americans

when they were incarcerated. I imagine, to a much lesser degree, the emotions that I experienced when my Professor told me to move tables were similar to the way my relatives felt when their government told them they were enemy aliens who needed to be removed. In the same vein, the fear I felt about speaking out in class about my hesitation to the pledge of allegiance and my reluctance to share my experience in that class in some ways parallels the fear that I imagine my relatives felt about standing up for themselves and their rights. To this day, I still wonder why my family members do not openly and willingly speak about their experience or take a stronger stance on the wrongdoings of their country. Yet, at the same time, I am beginning to understand the many factors that not only shape what we remember, but also the factors that influence which memories we remember and choose to communicate to others. Even in writing about my experience in this study, I worry if and/or how it will change the way people look at me. While I feel strongly about what happened in my undergraduate course, I hesitate to share that experience with others, even those I feel closest to.

In my own memories of my family's experience in the Camps, my own experience in my undergraduate class intervenes. Although the experience of being incarcerated is more traumatic and enduring than my own experience, the parallels between the two events, which occurred nearly 70 years apart, cannot be ignored. My own trauma experienced in that class has motivated me to try to better understand the Camp experience of my relatives both for the sake of knowledge, as well as to help me unpack my relationship to the past and my present. In such an excavation, the inherent messiness of memory takes center stage. By this, I mean that there are multiple and contradictory memories that exist of the Camp experience both within my family and

between myself and my family. The stories and narratives that emerge throughout this thesis are inevitably going to be different, and the addition of photographs is going to only further the ways in which memories will diverge. My goal and my hope is to better understand how photographs operate in the larger narrative of memory, as well as how and why people choose to remember. Being a generation twice removed from the Camp experience, I fully expect that my reading of photographs will be different than those of my relatives who lived the experience; yet, at the same time, it is within the differences and the parallels that emotions will be revealed and memories shaped and reshaped.

Incarceration in Context

My goal is not to recreate a story or memory of the Camp experience that can be universally agreed upon; instead, I hope to remain true to my family member's lived experience and their own memories while also creating my own. I purposefully defer the Truth question in my approach to the history and story of the Japanese American Incarceration. What I believe is of value in telling the story of the Camps is providing varying, and perhaps at times, contradictory, versions of the Camps in order to highlight the possibility of alternative truths that are often overshadowed by official versions of history. The story of the Japanese American Incarceration Camps is not a singular story, nor is there one experience that is universal to all who experienced them; however, the story of the mass Incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II often begins on December 7, 1941 with the attacks on Pearl Harbor. Following Japan's bombing of Pearl Harbor, President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 on February 19, 1942, which gave the United States Government the authorization to remove all persons of Japanese descent from designated areas as deemed necessary.

Following the signing of Executive Order 9066, persons of Japanese ancestry on the west coast were classified as dangerous enemy aliens and were ordered to inland Camps. Of those ordered to report to Incarceration Camps, more than 2/3 were U.S. citizens who, "by definition could not be legally 'interned'" (Alinder, 2009, p. 8). The Japanese Americans, half of whom were children, remained incarcerated at various remote Camps around the United States for up to 4 years. They were denied due process and stripped of their citizen rights. While Japan's attacks on Pearl Harbor were used as the rationale behind the Incarceration of all persons of Japanese ancestry on the west coast, this version of how and why the Camps happened fell under the rationale of wartime necessity.

While this version of the Incarceration dominates official public memory, it has also been criticized for its decontextualization of the Japanese American experience in the United States prior to Pearl Harbor (Okihiro, 1994; Takaki, 1998). Although for much of my life my education led me to believe that the Japanese American Incarceration was a result of Japan's December 7, 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor, I believe that a more nuanced approach to telling the story of the Camps is possible.

This commonly held belief about the Japanese American Incarceration has been studied in a historical context by some scholars (Okihiro, 1994; Takaki, 1998); however, my own family's story reflects both the experience of my family specifically in addition to many of the circumstances that impacted the experience of all those incarcerated. According to my great uncle, Bill Kashiwase, his life began to change following the attacks on Pearl Harbor:

> oh yeah.
> well

> we got
> cut off from the
> community
> I was suppose to go to high school but
> it was
> couldn't go to and from school
> stayed home all that time

Then, with the signing of Executive Order 9066, my Grandfather's family, the Kashiwase's, were sent to the Merced Assembly Center and eventually to the Amache Camp in Colorado. Families were sent to assembly centers based on their geographic location. Denny Fujita explains:

> people from California who were relocated
> had a good chance of going to topaz, Poston Arizona and Amache
> and uh
> the Executive Order came out here in the Bay Area
> the deadline to settle your affairs and to show up to be
> moved to an Assembly Center was quite early
> General Dewitt thought the San Francisco Bay Area was a real strategic area and had to clear the Japanese out of this area first so my parents decided to move to Livingston so that wherever the core of the family moved they would be able to as well

My Grandmother's family, the Oshima's, was sent to Tanforan Assembly Center and then spent the remainder of their Incarceration at the Topaz Camp in Utah. The Assembly Centers served as the gathering place for the Japanese in various areas on the west coast. Bill Kashiwase described his living conditions at the Merced Assembly Center:

> living quarters
> it was just a SHACK
> they built a shack
> thats about all
> it wasn't much
> but it was livable

After being ordered to their assigned Assembly Centers, families were transferred to more permanent Camps throughout the United States. Members of my family endured long train rides to both Topaz and Amache Camps in Utah and Colorado, respectively. The train ride for many was not pleasant and took several days. Bill Kashiwase explained:

> they had the shades pulled down
> but we peeked out (laughs)
> because every night we had to stop

After arriving at the Camps from the Assembly Centers, families were assigned to barracks where they would live for the duration of their time at the Camp. Although the Camps were constructed specifically for the relocation of Japanese Americans, the conditions of the living quarters and barracks were marginal. My great uncle, Moses Oshima, described the barracks:

> Basically I'd say
> terrible
> it was an improvement over being in Tanforan
> that was horrible

In addition to the poor conditions of the barracks, the Camp had several reminders that those in the Camp were not free. My great aunt, Aiko Oshima, explains:

> just like an army Camp
> with uh
> sentries
> and high
> uhh
> they're not buildings
> but cubicle type
> and they would have rifles and they would guard the whole Camp and the whole Camp you know was uh
> encompassed,
> we were surrounded by barbed wire and sentries
> with rifles

While the official memory and photographs from the Incarceration Camps often depict happy families and ordinary daily routines, it is important to remain cognizant of the reality that United States Citizens were forcibly removed and incarcerated. The question that arises in the story of the Japanese American Incarceration Camps is, how did this happen? As previously noted, the bombing of Pearl Harbor was a catalyst to the United States' entrance into World War II and the wartime necessity of removing all Japanese from the west coast; however, scholars (Okihiro, 1994; Takaki, 1998) have also delved into the Japanese American Incarceration in the context of the larger history of Japanese in California, resulting in a more expansive understanding of the motivations behind the mass Incarceration of Japanese Americans. Denny Fujita highlights four motivations for the signing of Executive Order 9066:

> I don't know that was necessarily just one item
> or one issue
> um
> having read about the alien land act
> um resentment against Chinese and Japanese and other Asians was definitely building
> um this resentment goes back to the Gold Rush era
> to the time of the railroads where Chinese laborers are brought in
> and then created competition in the gold fields
> so sort of like the attitudes towards Native Americans
> sort of the expendable easily pushed away
> um
> people who look different could easily be identified and could be excluded and could be harassed
> so the whole issue of um
> should Asians even be in the United States
> let alone should we allow them to own businesses and have property
> and to
> to have children to increase the population here
> there was tremendous fear and anxiety starting as early as 1905 1910
> that the population of Japanese Americans was just rising way too rapidly
> if you look at a population graph it was going up pretty remarkably
> but you're still talking about one hundredth of a percent
> tenth of a percent of total population in the state

> uh so
> there was also concern that Japanese farmers were monopolizing the
> the economics of crop being raised in the state
> part of it was having these limitations on how much land could be
> purchased or how much land could be leased
> forced Japanese to look at what crops could they raise to make the best profit
> and so it turned out to be very valuable crops like strawberries and asparagus and
> lettuce things that fruits that don't last very long but have a high value when
> they're in season
> it can be raised fairly intensive methods on small acreage
> so
> it
> the monopolization of some of these valuable crops led to a lot of resentment
> um
> about being present and being in competition with Caucasian farmers
> and I guess the third issue would be um
> just fear mongering
> that there was an element of the Japanese population in America that uh would
> would sabotage
> would help the enemy
> which turned out to be untrue
> but a great deal of fear
> and so some of these policies were developed I think to allay those fears
> to succumb to the pressures that the
> population was concerned about
> maybe a fourth contributor would be the newspapers
> tremendously exaggerated accounts
> Hearst Newspaper
> and other publications had a lot to do with the acceptance of these evacuation
> plans

Both the first generation, Issei, and the second generation, Nisei, were affected by Executive Order 9066. The Issei, because of their citizenship status, had faced discrimination throughout their time in California. Unlike European immigrants, the Japanese were visibly different, and through this difference, they were marginalized and excluded from many of the rights that Whites received.

Japanese on the west coast were excluded from labor unions and prohibited from owning land due to their citizenship status (or lack thereof). In 1790, The Naturalization Law was passed in order to limit naturalized citizenship to those classified as Whites.

Such a classification allowed immigrants from countries such as Ireland and Italy to become naturalized citizens despite the other forms of discrimination they faced. Alternately, The Naturalization Law of 1790 prohibited Japanese from obtaining citizenship, a prerequisite to voting and political rights. Whereas European immigrants were permitted to become naturalized citizens, the lack of Whiteness of the Japanese prohibited them from becoming citizens, owning land, and exercising political power. Although the Issei hoped to become accepted in America, it quickly became apparent that they would never be seen for anything other than their Japanese-ness. Aiko Oshima's parents, both of whom were Issei, did not agree with their Incarceration, yet at the same time, their status within the United States prior to Executive Order 9066 is reflected in their reaction to the Camps:

> and my parents
> of course said it was wrong
> but they would go like this (shrugs shoulders)
> and say this is something
> that we can't help,
> you know

However, the Nisei found themselves in a unique position because of their status as United States citizens. Despite their citizenship, the Nisei were not fully accepted into American society and were seen as perpetual foreigners. However, legally and culturally, their sense of themselves was as Americans with a Japanese cultural background. Despite the duality faced by the Nisei, many believed that "'Patriotism' would be the key to open the door to acceptance" (Takaki, 1998, p. 223). Former JACL President James Sakamoto stated: "Only if the second generation as a whole works to inculcate in all its members the true spirit of American Patriotism can the group escape the unhappy fate of being a clan apart from the rest of American life" (Takaki, 1998, p. 223). The Nisei

strove to be seen as loyal Americans, yet often received reminders that they would always wear the racial uniform of Japanese. Perhaps the largest reminder that they were not viewed as Americans was their Incarceration due to their ethnic origin. Aiko Oshima's experience illuminates the middle ground occupied by many Nisei, not fully Japanese, but not fully American either:

> but us kids weren't raised with their kids
> you know
> so it wasn't until the war came and we were
> (pause)
> sent to Assembly Centers
> thats the first time we saw
> ALL these Japanese
> and actually
> I myself didn't know how to act, react to them.
> SO I kinda went into a little shell
> because
> growing up with Italians and Germans and other nationalities and Chinese,
> you know and not knowing
> other children
> you know of Japanese ancestry
> until we
> were sent to Merced Assembly Center

It becomes evident how the Nisei could feel displaced by the Incarceration because of their already existing identity of an American with a Japanese background. The duality of growing up among a diverse group of individuals while also experiencing discrimination based on their Japanese heritage is a memory that had the potential to shape the experience of the Nisei and the way that they remember and choose to talk about their Camp experience.

In the larger scheme of World War II and the United States' involvement, those events such as Pearl Harbor, the Atomic Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the Battle at Iwojima are marked and remembered through iconic photographs, whereas the

Japanese American Incarceration Camps are often forgotten (Sturken, 2001). Few Americans are unfamiliar with the iconic mushroom cloud photograph or the raising of the flag at Iwojima, both of which emphasize the way that a photograph can make us remember an event, as well as the ways that it can help us forget (Sturken, 2001). Given the ways that photographs create remembering and forgetting, it is crucial to understand how the photographs from the Incarceration were produced, as well as the ways in which they are used to guide memory and acts of remembering.

The Japanese American Incarceration is a historical Moment that if not told, gets lost in history. If it is not talked about and told and retold, all we have is the official memory of the event, a single, capital "T" Truth. It is only through the memory process of individuals who experienced the Camps themselves that we can uncover truths and other ways of knowing and remembering that otherwise would remain untold. Memory work surrounding the Camps is not just a matter of shaping my own memories about the Camp; rather, it is also the primary way in which those stories and memories that are circulated in the public and public understanding are formed. As we remember Moments in history, such as the Japanese American Incarceration, it is exactly that, a Moment in time that is and will continue to be constantly reconstructed in the future. The experience of my relatives will be told and retold to future generations, and right now, the opportunity to see and hear their experience in their own words is still available. Through sharing their own experience and providing alternative truths, they are making an attempt at their own agency and creating their own truth, things that have historically been left to government records and official public memory. While the photographs I will use and the stories I will hear are about my family, my approach extends to the larger

picture of how the Camps are remembered and the relationship between photographs, memory, and identity, as well as how people remember, and what people choose to remember.

In order to elucidate the value in studying family photographs, it is important to understand how others have studied photographs from the Japanese American Incarceration. In addition to addressing whose photographs have been studied, it is also useful to explore how the photographs have been used and what story of the Camps has been allowed to be presented and reinforced to the public.

Writing on Incarceration Photographs

During the years of the Incarceration of Japanese Americans, the government authorized select photographers to enter the Camps and photograph the lives and experiences of the incarcerated Japanese Americans. These images that were produced are important because "on one hand, camera images can embody and create memories" (Sturken, 2001, p. 35); however, at the same time, the restrictions placed on photographing the Japanese American Incarceration resulted in a limited number of photographs that can be used to remember and reconstruct the Incarceration experience. Official War Relocation Authority (WRA) photographs serve as the dominant historical record used to remember the Incarceration. However, because of the scarcity of non-WRA photographs available to the public, scholars (Alinder, 2009; Creef, 2004; Danovitch, 1981; Gordon, 2006; Ishizuka, 2006; Kuramitsu, 1995; Weglyn, 1999) who have studied photographs from the Japanese American Incarceration often focus on the sanctioned photographs produced by Ansel Adams and Dorthea Lange.

These government censored photographs are worthy of being studied for their ability to create remembering, yet they simultaneously contribute to a narrow understanding of the Camp experience and provide only one perspective from which to conceptualize the event. For example, Art History scholar Kristine Kuramitsu (1995) argues that "the government photos of the Incarceration serve as a tool to deceive and disguise the injustice of the Incarceration by focusing only on the visually benign, pleasant, or poetic aspects of the experience" (p. 623). To this end, the majority of scholarship written on photographs from the Japanese American Incarceration focuses on the photographic work of Adams and Lange. The dominant narratives that emerge from this line of research include an analysis of Adams and Lange's photographs in terms of their visual representation of nationality and patriotism (Creef, 2004); their failed attempts to provide "truthful" representations of Japanese Americans and the Incarceration (Alinder, 2009; Creef, 2004); a comparison of their work (Creef, 2004); their benign, ordinary, and domestic representation of Camp life (Alinder, 2009; Creef, 2004; Sturken, 2001;); and the use of their photographs to endorse the WRA's version of the Incarceration (Kozol & Hesford, 2001; Kuramitsu, 1995). While each of these scholars have framed their analysis of the photographs in varying ways and at times reached conflicting conclusions about both Adams's and Lange's photographs, their research yields information that is valuable to my own reconciliation of the way that Adams's and Lange's photographs operate in remembering the Japanese American Incarceration. Additionally, the photographs taken by Adams and Lange have proved to be fruitful for others' research and have provided a foundation from which to explore

alternative avenues of inquiry by illuminating the scarcity of research on Camp photographs taken by nonauthorized photographers.

During the years of the Incarceration, the government authorized select photographers to enter the Camps and photograph the lives and experiences of the incarcerated Japanese Americans. Ansel Adams was invited to photograph the Camps by the project director at Manzanar, Ralph Merritt, beginning in November of 1942. Merritt instructed Adams to photograph Camp life in a way that highlighted the incarcerated Japanese Americans' loyalty to the United States government. At the discretion of the WRA, Adams was not to photograph the violent side of the Incarceration (Manzanar, in its earlier years, experienced the beating of Fred Tayama, which led to protests and riots) and he was forbidden from photographing any barbed wire or guard towers. Alinder's (2009) explanation of these directions is clear: the riot and any other symbolic representations of violence, such as guard towers, are in contention with the WRA and Merritt's ultimate goal of establishing Japanese Americans as worthy of reintegration into American society, as well as upholding the reputation of Incarceration Camps as peaceful centers.

Following Alinder's (2009) understanding of Adams's photographs, English scholar Judith Fryer Davidov (1996) suggests that Adams's photographs at Manzanar use the Nisei to paint an accomodationist view of Japanese Americans. This is accomplished in one of two ways: through the depiction of submissive subjects or through the visual representation of patriotism evidenced through enlistment in the United States army (Davidov, 1996). Adams's photographs perform in a manner that both supports and encourages an understanding of the Camps as humane, benign, and perhaps even

beneficial to those incarcerated. This view of the Camps that Davidov (1996) offers is further supported by Historian Jasmine Alinder's (2009) explanation of Adams's position as a WRA photographer. Alinder (2009) describes Adams's book *Born Free and Equal* as the epitome of promoting the government's message and aiding "in the transition of Nisei from the Camps into their post-Incarceration lives" (p. 53). Because of this, much of Adams's work from the Camps presents a combination of innocent portraits, innocent images of everyday activities, and snapshots of the serene and peaceful natural beauty that surrounded Manzanar. However, such images, while arguably part of a public relations Campaign on behalf of the government, also represented Japanese Americans in a way that challenged the images presented in war propaganda in the U.S. media (Alinder, 2009).

Because of the alternative view of Japanese Americans provided by Adams, Alinder (2009) finds reason to praise his work: "In his work at Manzanar, Adams challenged the derogatory portrayal of people of Japanese descent in U.S. war propaganda by insisting on the loyalty and "Americanness" of the incarcerated" (p. 45). An example of Adams challenging the circulating image of Japanese Americans as the enemy is his inclusion of individual portraits in *Born Free and Equal*. According to Alinder's (2009) analysis, this was significant because for many Japanese Americans, their association with Japan was evident in their appearance, specifically, their faces. Yet, instead of avoiding the association that the American public made with Japanese faces, Adams chose to include portraits of Japanese Americans that were confined to the face. These photographs were cropped in a way that the viewer's attention is drawn to the eyes, nose, and mouth of the individual. Alinder (2009) suggests that this strategy

begs the viewer to interact with the individual photographed in a familiar and very personal manner.

Despite Alinder's (2009) praise for Adams's work, she points out that Adams's book *Born Free and Equal* "also uncritically reproduced other aspects of dominant stereotypes of Japanese Americans, including the perception that they were passive and thus ideally suited for domestic labor and other forms of servile work" (Alinder, 2009, p. 45). Asian American cultural studies and visual studies scholar Elena Tajima Creef (2004), although similar to Alinder (2005, 2009) in certain aspects of her critique of Adams, also closely aligns with my own position on the portraits produced by Adams. Creef (2004) argues that Adams's portraits were an attempt to strip Japanese of their collective identity, consciousness, and sense of difference, in favor of a transcendent American individualism" (p. 31). It seems to me that although Adams may have succeeded in establishing Japanese American loyalty, he also removed individuals from their own histories. While I do adopt Creef's (2004) stance on Adams's attempt to strip Japanese Americans of their collective identity and consciousness, I also see Japanese Americans as being constructed as a homogenous group with little to no family or personal history. Rather than capture the individual spirit of Japanese Americans, Adams's photographs functioned as a way to create a singular Japanese American identity that fit the desires of American society. Because of this homogenous view of Japanese Americans constructed by Adams, dissenting Japanese American voices and faces were left out of *Born Free and Equal.* Their images were not captured, their stories not told.

In addition to Adams, the WRA also commissioned Dorthea Lange to document the Internment through photographs. Photographic documentarian Gina Wenger (2007) takes a sympathetic approach to analyzing Lange's photographs of the Camps. She highlights Lange's effort to photograph the harshness and difficulties that existed within the confines of the barbed wire through her photographs of the sick, the elderly, and the very young. In Wenger's (2007) opinion, Lange's photographs represented her sensitivity to the condition of the incarcerated, a condition that she attempted to document through her photographs. Despite such efforts, many of Lange's photographs were impounded, and before she passed away, Lange admitted that she was required to sign a contract that forbade her from discussing or disclosing her work (Wenger, 2007).

A criticism that both Lange and Adams have endured is their stance as outsiders. In order to further the distinction between "insider" and "outsider," as well as familial and public, I would like to review the literature written about Toyo Miyatake's photographs. Miyatake owned and operated a professional photography studio prior to his Incarceration, and upon his forced removal to Manzanar, Miyatake made the decision to chronicle life inside the Camps. According to multiple sources (Alinder, 2009; Chalfen, 1991; Creef, 2004), the restrictions placed on the use of cameras by Japanese Americans in the Camps varied across time and space. The most typical narratives regarding how family photos were obtained from the Camps explain that cameras may have been smuggled in by one family and then shared with others in the barracks, that lenses were concealed and brought into the Camps where a makeshift camera was then constructed, that sons and daughters who occasionally returned from their military service or job placements brought cameras on their visits, and lastly, some highlight the

loosening of restrictions on cameras as the war progressed. According to Alinder (2009), it is unclear whether Miyatake smuggled in a camera or built one once incarcerated, but regardless, he was able to capture images during his time at Manzanar.

Although Miyatake was not originally an authorized WRA photographer, his photographs have been used in government archives to recreate the Japanese Incarceration experience. Perhaps two of the most valuable and controversial photos taken by Miyatake involve two things whose presence is often absent in WRA photos: barbed wire and a guard tower. These two images by Miyatake are a testament to the images that are rarely seen, and thus forgotten among the smiling faces and posed photos of the Incarceration. One of the images, "Boys Behind Barbed Wire," is one of the most commonly reproduced photographs from the Incarceration. While this image is widely spread and has been reproduced in various contexts, it also demonstrates the way that photographs are not always simplistic, historical accounts of the past. In a similar vein, Alinder (2009) states, "…the perceived veracity of documentary photography has been manipulated and exploited to tell versions of history that often elide complex experiences and smooth over the contradictions of the past" (Alinder, 2009, p. 87). In smoothing over contradictions of the past, the ability for photographs to prohibit critical thinking, allows for a narrow understanding of the past. In particular, "The photograph of 'Boys Behind Barbed Wire' is not a window onto the past, but a highly constructed image, whose conceit stems from the position of Miyatake's camera, on the opposite side of the fence from the boys" (Alinder, 1998, p. 4). The photograph, when disseminated, does not encourage critical engagement with the context in which it was taken. The angle at which the photograph was taken suggests that either Miyatake or the boys were

positioned outside the fence. This begs important questions about whether or not the boys were performing for the camera or if their expressions are sincere. This aspect of the photograph does not minimize the ability for the photo to represent injustice, but it does raise questions about the agency of those incarcerated to make decisions about how they were represented.

However, in addition to the barbed wire and guard tower, Miyatake was able to capture community events that an outsider or visiting photographer may not have had access to. While the mundane and ordinary nature of Miyatake's photographs could be criticized for not detailing the violence and injustice that transpired within the Camps, Alinder (2009) offers a response to such criticisms by stating that Miyatake did not intend to be the poster child for the antiCamp sentiment; instead, his hope was to document and create a visual record of the experience. This intent was relayed through Miyatake's son years after the Camps were closed. I believe this highlights one of the stances on photographs that I take in this thesis: the photograph is not a decisive, finite depiction of a single truth or reality; instead, the photo is a form of memory that allows for interpretation and reinterpretation.

One of the primary ways that photographs from the Incarceration exemplify the malleable nature of memory through photographs can be found in the literature written on the WRA's use of captions. Since Adams and Lange were both authorized by the WRA, their photographs were subject to captioning at the discretion of Camp authorities. Here, the issue of the photographer's agency becomes a point of contention in the context of both Adams's and Lange's photographs. For example, the WRA's use of captions emerged as a key way to preclude the viewer's interpretation of a photograph or to nullify

the photographer's original purpose in taking a particular photo. Alinder (2009) offers insight into this aspect of the censorship process by explaining that all WRA photographs were sent to a single processing location in Colorado where all captioning and photo distribution occurred. At this Colorado location, WRA employees (caption writers) were instructed to provide the photographs with captions that directed the viewer's attention to positive aspects of the photograph and concealed any references that could taint the government's reputation and image.

French Literary theorist Roland Barthes (1978) addresses the notion that words anchor the meaning of an image by describing text as something that can guide a viewer through an image, requiring the viewer to make certain twists and turns in order to arrive at a predetermined meaning chosen in advance by the words. Such an assertion seems to hold particularly true when I think about words attempting to anchor a particular meaning to an image. Words, or captions, are instrumental in guiding a viewer's reading of a photograph, yet this addition of text can also serve to misdirect the viewer and aid the construction of incomplete narratives or knowledge. Art critic and writer John Berger and Documentary Photographer Jean Mohr (1989) argue that words and images operate in a mutually reinforcing relationship dynamic. Through each one's presence, the others' truthfulness increases, creating a false impression of heightened certainty:

> In the relation between a photograph and words, the photograph begs for an interpretation, and the words usually supply it. The photograph, irrefutable as evidence but weak in meaning, is given a meaning by the words. And the words, which by themselves remain at the level of generalisation, are given specific authenticity by the irrefutability of the photograph. (Berger & Mohr, 1989, p. 91-92)

When put together, the power of the photographs and the power of the words are enhanced and any questions or uncertainty surrounding the meaning of a photograph gains the appearance of being answered.

With this understanding of the relationship between text and images in mind, it becomes apparent how the photographs taken by Adams and Lange exemplify the way that words can anchor meaning because the captions chosen by the WRA were intended to fix a particular view of the Camps in history. Although Barthes (1978) also acknowledges that text and image can work in complementary rather than competing ways, the use of words with WRA photographs seems to more fully represent words and images as being in opposition and the text being used to fix a predetermined meaning to a photograph.

One of Lange's photographs that demonstrates the competition for meaning between the image and the text depicts a young boy who stands staring at the camera, tightly holding a paper bag in one hand and the other hand by his mouth. Hanging from his coat is a clearly identifiable tag with his family number on display. Perhaps even more noticeable than the identification tag is the small boy's cap. He is wearing a sailor cap with the words "Remember Peal Harbor" clearly displayed. The sailor cap and family number tag work against each other, one identifying his loyalty to the United States, and the other labeling him as the Other.

Given what is known about Lange and her tendency to capture small protests and paradoxes, it seems likely she was aware of the irony that her photograph captured. Despite Lange's intent when she took the photograph, Alinder (2009) points to the way that a simple caption can transform how a photograph is read by calling the viewer's

attention to certain aspects of the photograph over others. Instead of highlighting the irony present in the sailor cap and identification tag, the WRA employee chose to caption the photograph in a way that calls attention to the maintenance of the nuclear family. The caption read as follows:

> The family unit is kept intact in various phases of evacuation of persons of Japanese ancestry. Above is a view…when the first group of 664 was evacuated from San Francisco. The family unit likewise is preserved at War Relocation Authority centers where evacuees will spend the duration. (Alinder, 2009, p. 39)

However, looking at the photograph, there is no evidence of a nuclear family. Instead, the small boy is flanked by two men, yet there are no clear signs that either man is the boy's father. Additionally, the photograph provides little visual evidence of a mother, a vital component of the "nuclear family" the WRA is keeping intact. Not only does the caption chosen by the WRA employee choose to ignore certain aspects of the photograph; the caption also seems to inorganically construct something that does not exist, as is evidenced by a clear lack of any sort of nuclear family in the photograph.

Lange represents an example of the way in which the addition of captions to her photographs removed her autonomy and restricted her agency as the photographer. Through the WRA authorized photographs, captions emerged as a key way to preclude the viewer's interpretation of a photograph or to nullify the photographer's original purpose in taking a particular photo. According to Alinder (2009), Lange failed in her attempt to capture the harshness of the Camps in large part because of her lack of control over the captions that accompanied her photographs. Without the power to control the captions, Lange discovered that her photographs were malleable and able to be shaped to

fit the needs of the WRA. Despite her efforts, Lange's photographs are in constant competition with the text that the WRA assigned each photograph.

As the above discussion demonstrates, official WRA photos taken during the Japanese American Incarceration have been studied quite extensively (Alinder, 2009; Creef, 2004; Gordon, 2006; Kuhn & McAllister, 2006); however, the personal photos taken by those incarcerated have received little attention with the exception of studies including Toyo Miyatake's photos (Alinder, 2009; Davidov, 1996). Given what is known about the WRA's control over the captions of the photographs taken by Adams and Lange, as well as their position under the control of the WRA, Miyatake's photographs that capture ordinary life begin to illuminate the importance of including photographs of the Incarceration that are taken by people other than Adams and Lange.

When photographs become free-floating signifiers in the public sphere, the accompanying text becomes even more influential. Especially with photographs of historical events for which we were not present, viewers of these photos are confronted by a multitude of images that are difficult to understand. There is a natural tendency for the viewer to latch on unquestioningly to any explanations that happen to be offered to them that can explain the meaning of the photo. The captions or text associated with the photograph then provides signposts that guide the viewer of the photograph toward a particular meaning. Both the photograph and the text increase their power through their relationship--the text reinforces what the viewer "sees" and the image reinforces what the text "says." However, when we flip through family albums, captions become decreasingly significant. Therefore, photographs taken by people other than authorized photographers, as well as those photographs that are not anchored to a written caption,

merit the attention of those attempting to explore how memory and photographs from the Japanese American Incarceration interact with one another and construct truths about the experience. While Adams and Lange's photographs offer material that can be used to study Camp photographs, much of the focus has been on the agency (or lack thereof) of the photographer. Work written on Miyatake's photographs (Alinder, 2009; Davidov, 1996) opened the door to conceptualizing Camp photographs as a joint effort between photographer and photographed subjects, which reinvigorated the conversation about agency.

As an insider, Miyatake's photographs represent an example of joint agency. By this, I mean that Miyatake and his subjects, together, were able to present a view of themselves that was not contingent on their Incarceration. Rather, as members of the same community and in the same situation, Miyatake and his subjects were able to create photographs that represented their own vision of their wartime experience. Davidov (1996) aligns with this reading of Miyatake's photographs adding, "it is not simply in imitation of the white man or in conformity to his expectations: they are reconstructing, insofar as they can in this restrictive environment, their own lives as, on the outside, high school and college students, nurses and teachers, farmers and artists (p. 236). Here, the similarities to Adams' photographs emerge: both attempted to capture ordinary Moments that stressed the strength of the community of Japanese Americans. However, again, the intent of the photographer and the subjects cannot be fully known. And while the photographs are tendentious, the truth that can be found in the agency of the subject represents not a capital "T" Truth, but rather the truth of the individual being photographed.

However, research on the agency of the photographed subject is not limited to the photographs of Miyatake. Alinder (2009) addresses the agency of the photographed subject by cautioning against reading the portrayals of Japanese Americans in an over-simplified manner. In looking at the photographs of Adams and Lange, she warns that a smile should not be read solely as a signifier of submissiveness or joy by pointing out that a smile could be a strategy implemented by the subject in order to project a specific image to outsiders, or it could be the result of someone's simple directions to "smile." I believe the agency of the photographed subject is an area that requires further exploration if we are to begin examining Camp photographs in order to gain a more complex understanding of the experience and memories of those in the Camps.

Alinder (2009) begins this line of research by examining the multiple reasons why a photographed subject may choose to smile for the camera: perhaps the subject wants to be read as obedient and servile in order to offer a stark contrast to the wartime propaganda that constructed an image of Japanese Americans as dangerous enemies. Such assertions can be foregrounded by the anti-Japanese sentiment during the time the photos were taken. "Intensely aware that the dominant media and the government were portraying them as criminals, many Japanese Americans apparently went out of their way to counter such images and savage whatever shred of dignity they could by dressing in their finest clothes and putting 'the best face' on a situation that was fundamentally humiliating and degrading" (Alinder, 2009, p. 17). In this reading of the WRA photos, Alinder (2009) is creating a shift in both agency and power. In recognizing the agency of the subject, we can deviate from official narratives of the Incarceration and complicate our understanding of the Incarceration experience, as well as the degree of truth and

authenticity attributed to photographs. Building upon Alinder's (2009) recognition of subject agency, I believe that the agency of photographed individuals should also be explored in terms of viewer agency in the process of communication and memory construction using family photographs.

As the agency of photographer and viewer are elaborated upon, I hope to begin to make the argument that agency cannot be overlooked in any effort to understand how photographs operate within the larger context of remembering and memory construction. In order to further the discussion of agency, we must turn to those who have most often been ignored when assigning agency in reading photographs: the photographed subjects and the viewers who are themselves implicated in the photograph.

While official government photographs from the Incarceration have received scholarly attention, those photographs from the Japanese American Incarceration that were never published, and therefore never studied, can contribute academically to the ongoing conversation about agency in photographs and memory. This study will contribute to the existing information that exists about Camp photographs, but it will also provide a new perspective because the photographs at the center of the research are family photographs rather than official government photographs. While I am limiting myself to my own family's photographs in this study, I believe it will be useful to future studies that wish to further explore photographs that rarely receive scholarly attention. Unlike the photographs taken by Adams and Lange, this study will use as its focus personal family photographs. Due to the difference between official government photographs and family photographs, I believe that new ways of understanding and making sense of individual agency, memory, and identity will emerge. Whereas those

photographs taken by Adams and Lange may have aimed to capture the everyday ordinariness of Japanese Americans, family photographs offer an alternative of view of everyday life that illuminates aspects of agency, such as family identity, which authorized photographers could not capture. It is within the nuances of family photographs that the everyday lives of Japanese Americans can reveal important information as to the meaning of photographs taken, as well as the role agency plays in remembering the Incarceration in the present and for future generations. In this sense, this study's overall contributions will be in the areas of identity and agency and will come from the relatively unexplored perspective of family photographs from the Japanese American Incarceration.

Reconstructing Family Through Photographic Memories

When I looked at my own family's photographs from the Japanese American Incarceration, I did not see what I had expected. I had imagined that my family photographs would provide the counter narrative to the construction of the Japanese American Incarceration circulated by the official narrative, yet as I flipped through the pages of photographs, I was met with images of the everyday, ordinary lives of what could be nearly any family. At first, I searched the photographs for a sign of unhappiness or despair; perhaps a child refusing to smile was signifying resistance. Then, I had Moments of thoughts such as: Maybe the Camps were not so bad after all. I realized that I was missing a key aspect of photographs: the role of agency. The family photographs I stared at did not have any meaning inherent to them; instead, the meaning of the photograph is something that is constructed through human agency. As a viewer of these photographs, I was exercising my own agency in piecing together the significance of what I saw. My past recollections of learning about the Camps in school crashed into my

personal feelings about the injustice of the Camps, which then were challenged by my own family's silence regarding their experience. While the meaning I assigned to the photographs emerged from habitualized ways of thinking, I was also exercising agency as I attempted to figure out what the photographs meant. In addition to my own agency, the agency of the photographer and the photographed subjects become increasingly important in understanding family photographs. Family photographs, unlike official government photographs, carry the weight of passing on family identity to future generations. While agency is an area that needs to be further explored in studies of all Camp photos, including those by Adams and Lange, family photographs offer the unique opportunity to explore agency from the perspective of critic/viewer, as well as the photographed subject's agency. As the critic in this study, I am able to actively engage with my own agency, as well as listen to the photographed subjects describe their Camp experience and narrate family photographs, which creates a unique space to exercise agency over photographs.

Family photographs from the Japanese American Incarceration both negotiate and embrace the inherent ambiguity of photographs. The elusiveness of both photographs and memory is visited by Hirsch (1997) in the following passage: "…the tension between the photograph's flatness and its illusion of depth, between the little the photograph reveals and all that it promises to reveal but cannot" (p. 119). This inadequacy of photographs reflects the elusiveness of photographs by demonstrating the way that a photograph holds much promise for the viewer in terms of recording an event, yet at the same time, that photograph promises to provide a memory that is riddled in ambiguity. In Sociologist Eviatar Zerubavel's (1996) work on retrieval sites of social memory, he

asserts that snapshots, home videos, and television are the primary means through which we, as individuals, remember our relatives, family events, and historical events. Elaborating on snapshots, Zerabuvel (1996) focuses on the production of images as an effort to freeze a Moment in time in order to preserve that Moment for future generations.

The use of photographs to communicate with future generations is an area that has been well studied by various scholars (Chalfen, 1991; Hirsch, 1997; Kuhn & McAllister, 2006; Zerabuvel, 1996) and identifies a main purpose of family photographs. Additionally, scholars studying family photographs and albums (Chalfen, 1991; Hirsch, 1997, Kuhn, 1995; Langford, 2001) have found that family photographs serve a particular function as a form of communication. In addition to constituting an occasion for communication, family photographs and family albums beg for a particular type of talk around their viewing. Hirsch (1997) says, "As a social practice, photography is one of the 'family's primary instruments of self-knowledge and representation—the means by which family memory [is] continued and perpetuated, by which the family story [is] henceforth…told'" (pp. 6-7). McAllister (2006) and Chalfen (1991) both follow this line of thought in their own research on family photographs. McAllister (2006) suggests that family photographs function as cultural artifacts that are preserved with the goal of sharing them with future generations. Similarly, Chalfen (1991) approaches family photographs and family albums as a mode of interpersonal communication. In particular, Chalfen's (1991) assertion that families use photographs to "retain and communicate historical, personal, social, and cultural information" resonates with my own understanding of my family's photographs (p. 63).

Chalfen (1991) cites American Studies scholar James Kaufmann when he describes family photographs as a strategy for organizing and arranging family experience. In addition to organizing and arranging family experiences, Chalfen (1991) also argues that through photographs, certain narratives or stories are "told, retold, and revitalized in visual forms" (p. 166). From this constant telling and retelling in addition to the conscious ordering of photographs to create a family history for future generations, family photographs become both a mode of communication and an instrument for enforcing a particular family identity. Kuhn (2007) points out that "in most societies, family photographs have considerable cultural significance, both as repositories of memory and as occasions for performances of memory" (p. 284). As an artifact, family photographs inherently contain messages or meanings that are constantly up for contestation, which is a key site of the interaction of memory and family photographs. Additionally, family photographs prompt storytelling and acts of remembering between family members because family photos are often intertwined to a larger family narrative.

The meanings and messages contained in family photographs are different from those meanings or messages that may be assigned to other photographs (nonfamily) because rather than being anchored through captions, family photographs are used to communicate various meanings that change over time. Often, words are used to either anchor or de-anchor photographs from their meanings. The inherent ambiguity in photographs is often negotiated through accompanying captions or text. It is through text that a single meaning is assigned and transmitted. On the other hand, family photographs are riddled with the same ambiguity as nonfamily photographs; however, their ambiguity is appropriated in a manner that increases the types of meaning that a photograph can

have and increases the amount of control the family has over the photograph and the ways that the photograph can be shaped to meet family needs over time and space. The family photograph, in many ways, is an ongoing conversation that is continually maintained over generations.

Art History scholar Langford (2001) describes family albums as "a horizontal narrative shot through with lines of both epic and anecdotal dimension" (p. 175). Within the realm of family photographs, the verbal performance of memory is magnified because as Langford (2001) notes, family albums and photographs tend to follow an "oral structure" more than other types of photographs. As a mode of communication, family photographs and albums often remain under the control of the family members and are used as a way to tell, retell, and revise the family's history. This purpose of family photographs makes captions, due to their fixed meaning, at odds with the purpose of family photographs. While captions and text strive to anchor meaning to a photograph, family photographs allow for the constant retelling and reremembering through oral communication with family members. The photographs, in combination with the oral narrative that the family chooses to assign the photograph, mark the meaning of the photograph and communicate the family's self-identity. In this way, the photographs themselves, as well as the family's agency in creating past memories, serves as the basis for creating a family memory of a past event and the ensuing image that such memories produce.

Often times, family photographs open a space in which a family narrative can be told and family identity can be reinforced rather than finding meaning within the actual event or objects being photographed. For example, in flipping through a family album,

the stories that are told are not always specifically about the photograph; instead, the photos foreground the family identity and stories that are transmitted. This is significant to understanding how memory and photographs operate within the specific context of family memory and family photographs because it illuminates the ways in which both agency and the identity of the viewer of the photograph influence the significance or meaning assigned to acts of remembering through photographs.

Family memory "is characterized by the strength of its group allegiances and its powerful emotional dimension (Erll, 2011, p. 306). Whereas collective memory may encompass the shared remembrances of a nation, family memory often refers to those memories shared by a closer-knit, interdependent group of individuals. This enhanced sense of emotional allegiance can be further unpacked by examining how intergenerational communication operates in collective and family memory. While it can be assumed that a nation's collective memory is passed down through generations, the intergenerational nature of family memory is more personal and reflects a specific identity particular to the family. Since collective memory is constantly being constructed and reconstructed, the transmission of information and memory from generation to generation is important; however, within the realm of family memory, the inter-generational communication that takes place serves a role that is more personally connected to the individual than the transmission of collective memory. For example, unlike other social groups such as those that we join extracurricularly, we do not choose which family we enter; we automatically enter into a predetermined position within a group that has already established rules and norms. These norms and rules of the family are imposed and instilled within us, thus representing the "inescapability of family

memory" (Erll, 2011, p. 306). Family memory is a specific type of collective memory where relations of kinship, as referenced by Halbwachs (1992), become increasingly significant. I believe it is this differentiation between the levels of investment of the individual in the memory being passed through generations that highlights how family memory is a type of collective memory, yet also has its own distinct characteristics. However, family memory, like collective memory, is maintained over time and is an ongoing process that is used to constantly define and redefine what the past means in the present.

A primary way that family memory shapes present memories is through the inter-generational communication of memories through photographs. For example, while each member of a family may have their own personal memories, there are often certain memories that are shared by all members of the family and that can be captured in a photograph or series of photographs. These memories that are shared by all family members represent those memories that form the collective memory of the family (family memory) and communicate the family's identity. And while family photographs are an important medium through which the family can communicate shared memories and identity, the aforementioned discussion of the relationship between image and text should be revisited. If family photographs either lack or have limited text (in the form of captions), the oral narrative that is constructed around the photographs becomes equally as important as the photographs themselves.

For this reason, oral history interviews provide the necessary space in which family members can create a narrative that addresses the ambiguity of the photograph by either anchoring a new meaning or deanchoring a presumed meaning to the photograph.

For example, family members may choose to orally share positive and happy aspects of Camp in order to reinforce what is seen in a photograph, or family members may express sentiments that contradict the seemingly joyous photographs and reframe how the photo can be understood. In this sense, oral histories are an opportunity for family members to exercise agency over how the family is remembered, as well as how photographs are understood by later generations. In addition to the family members' agency, oral history interviews open a space where I, as the viewer of the photograph, can construct my own captions and begin to imagine the captions that could narrate the experience captured in the photographs.

In short, oral history interviews provide the connective tissue that is inherently lacking in photographs to construct memories of the family identity and history. Oral history interviews carve out a performative space where I am able to interact with my family members who are the subjects of the photographs or have a close relationship to both the people photographed and the Camp experience. Oral histories offer a rare opportunity to explore how photographs are used in acts of remembering, as well as how my family members navigate photographic evidence when such photographs contradict the family memory that they want to present. It is within the contradictions, tensions, and nuances of the interactions between myself as the viewer of the photographs, my family members, and the photographs themselves, that oral histories as a method provide the opportunity to most fully grasp the human behaviors associated with remembering through photographs and the remembering of traumatic events.

CHAPTER 2

METHODS

Oral History Interviews

When I try to imagine how I would react if my country uprooted me from my life and forced me to live in a government-run Camp based solely on the fact that my ancestors are Japanese, I picture myself as being outspoken about the injustice, protesting this wrongdoing, and telling my story to anyone that will listen. Because of these feelings, I never understood why my family rarely spoke of their Camp experience. During a class in high school, I had learned about how many Japanese lost everything—their homes, their possessions, their land, their businesses, and their personal belongings. I learned about the all-Japanese American infantry, the 442nd Regiment, who risked their lives for a country that was imprisoning many of their families. More importantly, I began to realize that the experiences and stories of loss and sacrifice that I learned about in this class were those of my family as well. I was able to draw parallels—my Grandpa served in the Military Intelligence Service (MIS) and all his brothers and sisters were American citizens, yet were confined behind barbed wire. My family never explicitly spoke of the Camps, but I was able to piece together family stories I had heard about my Grandpa being in the military with the information I learned in my high school class called "The Japanese American Experience."

The story I had created in my mind about my family's Camp experience was disrupted when I looked at our family photos from that time period. I cannot remember how I learned that my family had photographs from their Camp years, but I must have always known because when I needed photographs for a class paper, I emailed my Mom and Dad asking about them. They sent me two sets of photographs—a CD that my Dad's cousin, Denny Fujita, had created titled "Kashiwase & Fujita Photos" and a collection of photos compiled by my Dad's uncle, Bill Oshima. As I looked through the photographs, I realized that I had seen these before, but I could not recall the reason or time. Looking at these photographs for the second time, I experienced a mixture of feelings. In many ways, the photographs I saw were not extraordinary in any way, which may shed light on why they had never caught my attention before. However, because the second time I looked through the photographs it was for a paper and I had no choice but to spend time combing through them and looking for what they meant, I was forced to really think about what these seemingly ordinary photographs represented. The photographs were not what I had hoped to see—I had hoped to see evidence of the loss and struggle that the Japanese American Incarceration Camps caused, but instead, I saw smiling family portraits, captured Moments of a growing toddler, and snapshots of the teenage years of my great aunts and uncles. Instead of pushing these photographs aside because I did not see what I expected (or what I wanted), I realized that the ordinary nature of these photographs held significance and that perhaps they would be valuable in furthering my understanding of the Camps. I have since approached the purpose of this study as recognizing the value in the seemingly ordinary, as well as learning more about the

photographs my family took at Topaz and Amache Camps in order to understand how these photographs interact with family memory and identity.

The photographs alone held a particular meaning to me, but I wanted to know more about whether or not they represented the Camp experience of my family. I felt that the story the photographs told was not the story of my family, yet their very existence made me question this belief. As a researcher, it was my job to highlight these photographs as a significant part of my family's history, but in order to discover the meaning behind them, I needed to hear about my relatives' memories of Camp first hand.

Oral histories provided the appropriate means through which to gather information and stories about my family members' experience in Camp. I started with the assumption that speaking with my relatives would provide a counter narrative to the memory of Camps created through my family photographs. I hoped that the oral history interviews would illuminate why the photographs I saw seemed to represent a version of the Camps that was in contradiction to how I had envisioned their experience. I imagined that using photographs in the oral history interviews would stir up specific memories or stories; I imagined that seeing the photographs would recall memories connected to the place (the Camps); I imagined that the photographs would serve as the foundation of the interviews. However, I also knew that my identity as a relative and a younger generation had the potential of affecting what my relatives would say. Given the research that has shown that family photographs are a primary way of passing on family memory and identity to future generations, I assumed that the relatives I interviewed would be cautious of what they said in order to maintain the dignity of the family name. This knowledge prepared me for the oral history interviews by turning my attention to the

importance of not just *what* is said, but also *how* it is said. Beyond that, I went into my interviews knowing that the words spoken and recorded were significant and meaningful; however, those meanings that could not be recorded such as emotions and feelings expressed through embodied actions required my attention.

This approach to research is supported by performance scholars (Conquergood, 1991; Turner, 1986) who argue against the privileging of written text over other ways of knowing. Critical Performance scholar Dwight Conquergood (1991) states: "It would be a great mistake for a communication researcher simply 'to sit down with a transcript of discourse' and privilege words over other channels of meaning" (p. 189). My own approach to conducting the oral history interviews mirrors Conquergood's effort to move research away from a purely text-positivism approach and advocates the idea that the world can be understood through performance. The everyday performances of individuals, such as those that take place during oral history interviews, can reveal much about the meaning behind what we know and how we know. I believe that it is within the interplay between the spoken word and the performed actions of my relatives that I will have the best chance at getting to understand their experience. While I believe that the words recorded during my oral history interviews are important, equally important is the context behind the words, as well as how the words are spoken.

Oral histories are not just texts that document a story; rather, oral histories, as a practice, are embodied performances that provide and create meaning that lies far outside the boundaries of the text or recorded word. The meanings that emerge in the process of the oral history interview cannot be translated into text because the words cannot capture the bodily expressions and experiential dimensions of the dialogic process occurring

between the participant and the researcher. Oral histories, more than a record of an historical event, are embodied performances where telling is transformed into doing, where by telling, meaning is being made. Due to the meaning-making process inherent in oral history interviews, the performance of oral history acquires significance through its coperformance with the researcher, which makes the process of oral history a collaborative, dialogic experience. By seeing myself as a coperformer, the oral history interview acquires depth and complicates the meaning that emerges. Memory scholar Marianne Hirsch (2005) quotes Performance scholar Diane Taylor as stating: "…it is clear from their quotations and examples that traumatic memory is transmitted from victim to witness through the shared and participatory acts of telling and listening associated with live performance" and the listener "comes to be a participant and co-owner of the traumatic event" (p. 1504). Oral histories represent the Moment that remembered events are transmitted through embodied memory acts, often using the body as medium for expression. Within these Moments of embodied acts of remembering, those acts that lie outside of discourse such as a laugh, tear filled eyes, averted eye contact, or a sudden change in demeanor are captured and felt by the researcher in a way that reading a transcript or text could not communicate. It is within the practice of oral history interviews that the performance-related questions of making meaning through bodily experience and the researcher as coperformer become both crucial to using oral histories effectively as well as interrogating the claims about what it means to be a coperformative witness as researcher.

If oral histories can be conceptualized as something other than solely an objective, factual record of an historical event, then the nuanced, embodied, and performative

aspects of oral histories can be excavated in order to complicate meanings and introduce possibilities that open a space for other ways of knowing and understanding. Oral histories, when understood as more than an historical record, provide a lens through which to see how a particular individual remembers a Moment in history from a specific standpoint. *What* those speaking say is equally as important as *how* they say it and *why* they say it. Questions as to the subject position of the speaker and the context in which the speaker is speaking can reveal just as much, if not more, than the words being recorded. If, as Ethnographer Soyini Madison (2010) argues, "History makes subjects and subjects make history," then the performance of the speaker must be recognized as a habitualized performance that is intertwined with the history of both the historical event being discussed and the speaker's position within that history. Through oral history performance, the present and past unfolds, interacts, and is in constant interaction.

The use of oral history interviews in this study embraces the nuances of human interaction and human experience, which maximizes the potential contributions to furthering our understanding of the experience of those interviewed, as well as the role of family photographs in this remembering. I can propose this possibility because as a coperformative witness who is participating in the meaning making process, there are feelings that are communicated and translated to me that cannot be said through words; they are felt in the Moment and in the relationship dynamic.

My own experience as a researcher conducting oral history interviews benefits from understanding oral histories as a performance both on the part of the person interviewed and myself as the researcher. Since oral histories are both dialogic and coperformative, my oral hsitory interviews with my relatives about their experience in

Incarceration Camps during World War II become increasingly complex. I do not use the word complex in the pejorative; rather, I mean to highlight the importance of a laugh or the deep-rooted pain in tear-filled eyes that could, without a recognition of the performative nature of oral histories, go unnoticed. Additionally, the self-reflexivity exhibited by Madison (2010) pushes me to see how my position as the researcher can and does affect the meaning and knowledge that is made and remade through the oral history performance. And lastly, while the oral history process itself is central to my analysis, I must be continually conscious of my own transformation and my own intentions as I perform my research.

In his autobiography, 19th-century African American leader Frederick Douglass proposed that we "reimagine participant-observation as coperformative witnessing" (Conquergood, 2002, p. 149). Douglass argues that those who want to understand slavery put down their books and "meet enslaved people on the ground of their experience by exposing oneself to their expressive performance" (Conquergood, 2002, p. 149). Coperformative witnessing, as described by Conquergood (2002), represents an "experiential, participatory epistemology" (p. 149). This notion of coperformative witnessing challenges the idea that as the researcher, I can know without feeling and experiencing.

This relationship between experiencing and feeling as described by Douglass and Conquergood also has implications on who is the *knower* and who can be *known.* I have modeled how I view myself as the researcher in this study off the work of ethnographers such as John Jackson (2005), Soyini Madison (2010), and Kathleen Stewart (1996), who have attempted to complicate our understanding of the role of the researcher. These three

authors in particular provide important insight because throughout each researcher's work, the reader is guided through a research process that does not privilege the authority of the researcher nor does it attempt to produce clear cut, final knowledge about the people at the center of their work. In his ethnography, Jackson (2005) is not intent on getting the "right" answer; rather, through his interactions with the people of Harlem, he is attempting to figure out how he, as the researcher, can get at the nuances of those he interacts with. Through human interaction, the small details of everyday performances can be detected and used to further our understanding of the meaning that emerges from the dialogic process of oral history interviews.

As a coperformer in this study, my own role as the researcher requires self-reflection and analysis. The role of the identity of the researcher has proven to be crucial to the researcher's understanding of the people and processes being studied. For example, throughout Madison's (2010) ethnographic work in Ghana, she herself undergoes a transformation. As coperformer and coperformative witness, Madison has highlighted the crucial nature of self-reflection as an integral part of the research process. In reading *Acts of Activism: Human Rights as Radical Performance,* it becomes evident that in research and in taking on the position of coperformer, the transformation that the researcher undergoes reveals much about ourselves in addition to the meanings that emerge from our work. My assumptions, expectations, hopes, and fears that existed at the onset of this study have since evolved and remained the same. The memories I have created for myself through my interactions with my family members, as well as the meaning that the photographs have acquired in my eyes, represent the ways that coperformative research constantly reminds me of my own agency in how I remember

the Camps, as well as how interactions with my family members through oral history interviews transform my own feelings towards my family and the Camps. My own subject position confronted me and made me aware that I cannot fully understand their experience, and because of that, I cannot make judgments about how they choose to remember or conduct their lives.

The Oral History Interview provides a space in which my relatives can safely do memory. The memory space that is constructed lends itself to presenting the speaker with a sense of legitimization, a feeling that may not exist within alternative spaces. For this reason, the Oral History Interview is conducive to the memory process because it embraces the inherent instability, malleability, and insecurity characteristic of memory. I have chosen to provide the transcription of my oral history interviews in poetic verse following the lead of ethnographer Madison (2010) who says, "poetic transcription reflects what happens when we translate beyond the "good syntax" and the spelling eye of the prose writer and embrace the poetic style in lines of varying lengths, positioning words and phrases in ways that project the rhythm as well as the tone and affect of the human voice" (Madison, 2010, p. 169). In an attempt to privilege the feeling, sensing, and dialogic nature of oral histories, using poetic verses is an attempt to honor the *what* and *how* of the words. Additionally, words in all capitals signify that the speaker placed an emphasis on the words, and words in italics represent an action that the speaker made or did.

Participants

Choosing whom to interview became a more complicated process than I had originally planned. I turned to my mom and dad for guidance because the two people whom I wanted to interview most, my grandma and grandpa (Figure 1), were no longer with us. Neither of my grandparents stayed in the Camps for long because my grandpa, E.J. Kashiwase, joined the military and sent for my grandma, Miye Oshima, to join him in Minnesota. Despite their brief time in Camp, hearing their experiences was something

Figure 1. Miye (Oshima) and EJ Kashiwase, 1944

I felt I needed to hear in order to help me sort through my own relationship to the Camps. Since that was not possible, their brothers and sisters served as the next best options. I chose Bill Kashiwase, my grandpa's younger brother; Mary Kashiwase, my grandpa's younger sister; Moses (Moe) Oshima, my grandma's younger brother; Aiko Oshima, my grandma's sister-in-law; and Denny Fujita, my grandpa's nephew.

Interview 1: Bill Kashiwase-Sunday, August 5, 2012

Uncle Bill (Figure 2) bears a striking resememblance to my grandpa. They share the same mouth, jawline, and ears. On the day of the interview, my dad drove me the 2 hours to Sacramento, California where Bill lives in a retirement home. My dad had been to the assisted living facility before to visit Uncle Bill, so when we pulled into the parking lot, I followed him into the building, past the reception desk, down a hallway, past the dining area, up a flight of stairs, down another hallway, and finally arrived in front of my uncle's door. I knocked quietly. When the door opened, two of my dad's cousins, Paul and Ron Kashiwase (Bill's sons), were standing in the doorway. I greeted

Figure 2: Bill Kashiwase. Work Release-Seabrook, New Jersey, 1944 (right)

each of them and they welcomed us into the apartment. Uncle Bill, hearing the commotion, had gotten up from his rocker to see who was at the door. He immediately saw my dad, walked towards him and extended his hand, addressed him by his first name, and seemed excited to see him. He exclaimed: "Hi David!" His reaction to me was not as enthusiastic and I don't think he remembered who I was. Because I arrived with my dad, he knew we were related, but I don't think he recognized my face because I had not seen him for a few years.

My dad, Ron, and Paul decided to take a walk around the building in order to allow me time with Uncle Bill. After they left, Uncle Bill looked at me, a bit puzzled, but did not say anything. I pulled up a chair such that I sat in front of him slightly off to his left. I began asking questions that were met quickly with brief responses. At 84 years old, Uncle Bill is becoming hard of hearing and also occasionally spoke quietly. Despite his short-winded nature, Uncle Bill was definitive in his responses and endearingly blunt. At about 22 minutes, this was the shortest interview, but my overall visit was about 1.5-2 hours. After I turned off the recorder and my dad, Ron, and Paul returned to the room, we decided to all get lunch together. I walked behind Uncle Bill as we walked out to the parking lot. He walked slowly, carrying his cane in one hand, but holding it such that it hovered above the ground. After lunch we returned to Uncle Bill's apartment and my dad and I prepared to leave. As I packed up my belongings, Uncle Bill remained standing rather than returning to his rocking chair. My dad extended his hand to say goodbye. I walked over to Uncle Bill and we hugged.

Throughout the interview, I felt sad imagining Uncle Bill being forced into Camp. He did not say anything specific that made me feel this way, but the way he talked about

wanting to get out of Camp as soon as he could and not graduating with his class because he did not want to wait to leave reminded me that these details, while perhaps small, represent the intense feelings that Bill experienced, even though he did not explicitly communicate those emotions to me during the interview. In particular, Bill said he remembers Camp as a prison, yet he thinks they should be called Internment Camps because "it sounds better." Such a statement raises questions about how Bill is constructing his identity based on his memories and how something is remembered informs his identity. Despite an "it is what it is" attitude, Bill's interview offers insight into other possibilities that can be further explored through the framework of memory and identity.

Interview 2: Aunt Mary-Sunday, August 5, 2012

As I walked up to the front door of Mary Freeman's (Kashiwase) house, I could not recall what she looked like. It had been several years since I last saw her and I was unsure what to expect. As the door opened, I was met with the face of an 85-year-old woman small in stature, who would easily have passed for a 65-year-old in appearance and energy. She immediately embraced me with a warm and welcoming hug. Originally, Aunt Mary (Figure 3) was not going to be interviewed, but due to a few twists of fate, I was able to set up a last-minute interview with her. Because of the complicated process of arranging the interview, I had a few nerves when I knocked on the door, but the love that emanated from her smile and voice eased any anxiety I had.

When I walked into her house, I wasn't sure where to go. There was a kitchen to my left and a living room to my right. Instead of asking, I lingered in the entryway until Aunt Mary gently nudged me towards the kitchen. Upon turning the corner to the

Figure 3: Mary Freeman. Amache, 1944 (right)

kitchen, I was met with the grin of Uncle Amos. The kitchen table, large and rectangular, was covered in various books, folders, and papers. Aunt Mary sat down and motioned for me to sit in a seat that had been cleared to her left. Uncle Amos sat at the head of the table to my right, and my dad sat down across from me. The conversation turned to small talk as my dad exchanged pleasantries with his aunt and uncle—they asked about my mom and sister and told us about their upcoming vacation to see their grandchildren. Soon thereafter, my dad excused himself to go on a walk in order to give me space to start my interview.

Before I could say anything, Aunt Mary pulled out an envelope and started pulling out photographs and laying them down in front of us. I pointed and laughed at the size of the massive glasses frames that my relatives were wearing in the photographs, and Aunt Mary pointed out and named each person. The photographs she showed me were not from the Camps, but they were indicative of how the interview would proceed

and feel. Yes, the interview was about the Camps, but more than that, it was about family. For nearly 2.5 hours (only 1 hour 54 minutes recorded), I sat next to Aunt Mary and reminisced about her memories of Camp, of growing up, and of my grandparents. Midway through the interview, Aunt Mary's daughter walked in the front door with fresh Monju from a local bakery in Sacramento. Knowing that my dad and I were coming, Aunt Mary had sent her daughter to get fresh Monju for us—I gladly obliged to my aunt's request and ate a piece and took a few for the road as well. However, before I left, Uncle Amos took a picture of Aunt Mary and myself, as well as a picture of my dad, Aunt Mary, and me. They insisted on printing copies of each photo for my dad and me before we left.

Throughout the interview, it was clear to me that Mary wanted to be helpful and provide me with information. On more than one occasion, she referenced reading she had done to research about the Camps, which, at first, took me by surprise because I could not understand why she had to read about something she had experienced. In addition to providing information about the Camps, Mary told many stories about the family and seemed to enjoy reminiscing about memories both preCamp and postCamp. Overall, the interview was a fun journey into my family's history in general rather than just focusing on the Camps; however, Mary became emotional when she talked about her parents and the injustice they endured in Camp. The visceral reaction that Mary had to her parents experience was interesting and contrasted with the rest of the interview.

Interview 3: Denny Fujita-Tuesday, August 7, 2012

My dad's cousin Denny (Figure 4) is a 69-year-old retired chemistry professor who has taken an interest in our family history. Although he is "retired," he still works tirelessly volunteering with conservation groups and performing in-depth research on our family. Part of our family history in which Denny has taken an interest is the Incarceration period. His Father, Henry Fujita, was very observant and had an active analytical mind, according to Denny. During the Camp period, Henry Fujita turned his energy towards observing and documenting the family's experience. Because of the efforts of Henry Fujita, Denny was able to gather letters and other forms of correspondence that helped in piecing together his family history. I initially reached out to Denny in April 2012 in hopes of locating photographs from the Camps because my dad told me about Denny's involvement and research regarding our family history.

Through our email correspondence, it became clear to me that he had invested a lot of time researching and organizing family information. He mailed me a research project that he had been working on involving his grandfather (Tsuneji Fujita) that related to the 1913, 1920, and 1923 Alien Land Laws. The case was entitled "The People of the State of California vs. Tsuneji Fujita, Eigi Fujita, Katsumi Fujita (his father), Michi Fujita and Tomoe Fujita." The case was appealed to the State Supreme Court and was settled in favor of the Fujitas in 1932. Thereafter, that decision served as a precedent so that many other Nisei were able to legally purchase land in California. He created a 114-page booklet detailing the cases and named it "The Fujita Property Case & California Alien Land Laws." Denny's research has also extended to family photographs, mainly through the compilation of family photos. He created digital copies of family photographs from

Figure 4: Denny Fujita. Amache, 1944 (right)

their time at Camp and happily shared them with his extended family (my family included).

My mom accompanied me on this interview because she thought it would be nice to catch up with Denny's wife, Sue, while I interviewed Denny (and she wanted to take them out to lunch after). Both Denny and Sue greeted my mom and me at the front door. As I looked around, I saw a dining room table to my right that was covered in stacks of papers, folders, and books. We walked past this table into the kitchen where discussion quickly turned to Denny and Sue's cat, which evolved into a tour of their home. The backyard was beautifully landscaped and cared for, with an abundance of plants and trees; it was exactly what I would expect from someone as meticulous as Denny. After the tour, Denny and I made our way into the dining room to the table covered in books and papers. Throughout the interview, I interjected questions, but also wanted Denny to have the opportunity to share his wealth of knowledge; given the extensive research he had performed, I was afraid that asking questions would limit the information he shared.

My interview with Denny was a joint effort to work through the stacks of folders and papers that he had on his table. Much of what he said was in reference to the document he had in hand at the time; often, he would ask if I wanted a copy. If I did, he would set it aside in a pile. By the end of the interview, there was a hefty stack of documents such as letters, work release requests, newspaper articles, and other documents from the Camp experience that I wanted copies of. His wife, Sue, kindly offered to make the copies for us while we continued talking. Denny was a great resource and had granted me access to many documents that I otherwise would likely not have discovered on my own.

Prior to arriving at Denny's home in Sebastopol, California, I had a feeling that my interview with him was going to be extremely educational because of all the research he had personally performed. This feeling was correct. For the most part, Denny spoke from a seemingly academic viewpoint that reflected the extent of his research on the Incarceration. Because he was born in Camp, many of Denny's memories are informed by stories others have told him, his research, and photographs. As he notes, he does remember much from Camp; it still seems that he is affected by the experience and is mindful of the experience of his parents, specifically, his Father, Henry Fujita. There was one occurrence in the interview when I felt that Denny's demeanor about the subject matter shifted to a slightly more personal and subjective one, and that was when he spoke about being born in Camp, although, he did not elaborate on what that meant to him. Our interview lasted 2 hours and 2 minutes.

Interview 4: Aiko Oshima- Wednesday, August 8, 2012

Of all the interviews I did for this study, I was most familiar with Aunt Aiko and Uncle Moe. With the exception of the past 6 years, my family spent Thanksgiving and Christmas with Aunt Aiko and Uncle Mo. On rotating years, they would host it at their home in Castro Valley. When my mom and I arrived at their home, Aunt Aiko (Figure 5) opened the door and greeted me with a long embrace. It had been several years since I had last seen her, and I could tell how happy she was that I was at her home. She was smaller in stature than I remember; she could not be more than 5 feet and 90 pounds. At 84 years old, she was still very active and energetic. She led us from room to room explaining anything and everything that might have changed since we had last seen her house. After the tour, my Mom excused herself to pick up lunch at a Chinese restaurant down the street. My aunt and I sat at their kitchen table, a small, round, white table. We sat directly across from each other and began our interview. Aunt Aiko had prepared for the interview by pulling out books about the Camps, as well as old pamphlets from past Camp reunions. She would occasionally stand up and walk behind me where there was a massive stack of "stuff." She offered to allow me to borrow any of the books or pamphlets I wanted; she even offered to let me take her high school yearbook from Amache.

Throughout the interview, she was extremely open to sharing what she remembered and seemed to enjoy speaking about her experience. Every time I asked, "is there anything else you want to add?" or "Is there anything else you remember?," she always had a new story to share or a new point to make. Aunt Aiko wanted me to understand as much as I could without having been there. For example, when she tried to

Figure 5: Aiko Oshima, Amache, 1945 (right)

explain the barracks to me, she jumped up and searched the counter for a paper and pencil so she could draw a picture of how they were set up. Aunt Aiko had a refreshing enthusiasm, but she also expressed raw emotion and let herself feel and experience however her memories took her. She remembered the positive things about the Camp with a smile, but she also showed her pain through her tears when she discussed the struggle of her parents. My interview with Aunt Aiko lasted just under 1 hour.

Aunt Aiko highlighted the positives of her Camp experience, but was also visibly disturbed by recollection of the treatment of citizens and became emotional when talking about the Incarceration of her parents. This combination of positive statements about Camp with explicit statements of pain and anger raises questions about memory and how and why certain memories are constructed and what narratives are privileged through the remembering process.

Interview 5: Moe Oshima- Wednesday, August 8, 2012

After completing my interview with Aunt Aiko, my mom came in with the food and we set up a buffet on their counter. My aunt, my mom, and I filled our plates with food and waited for Uncle Moe to come inside. When Aunt Aiko told him it was lunchtime, he said he was supervising yard work in the front yard. My mom, aunt, and I finished lunch and Uncle Moe still had not come inside. Aunt Aiko again asked Uncle Moe to come in and he said he would be in soon. We cleaned up the dishes and my mom and I decided we would run some errands then come back later in the day to interview Uncle Moe. Right as we opened the door to leave, he was standing up from the stoop and getting his walker set up to help him get inside. We sat at the same kitchen table where I had previously interviewed Aunt Aiko. As long as I can remember, Uncle Moe (Figure 6), a retired pharmacist, has been a very practical and intelligent man. At 89, he is still a mentally sharp individual despite failing hearing.

During my interview with him, there was little eye contact and the long pauses in his answers made his answer feel very calculated. For about 45 minutes, much of the information Uncle Moe chose to share was about the family; he spoke in a formal and informative manner, which made me feel like he was carefully crafting the stories he told me in order to convey a certain story about our family. The phrase, "on the whole" were used to reference the family, with main focus being on how well the family stayed together even during the Camps. Uncle Mo crafted his statements to portray the family in a positive light and to possibly neutralize the Camp experience He tended to focus more on the positives than the negatives and often referenced my grandparents, EJ and Miye, throughout the interview.

Figure 6: Moses Oshima, Topaz, year unknown, (right)

CHAPTER 3

PHOTOGRAPHS AS PROPS

The focus of this chapter is on the way the photographs were used in the interviews. Before completing my interviews, I wrote, "I imagined that using photographs in the oral history interviews would stir up specific memories or stories; I imagined that seeing the photographs would recall memories connected to the place (the Camps); I imagined that the photographs would serve as the foundation of the interviews" (Chapter 1). However, now that I have conducted the interviews and analyzed the role of the photographs in the oral history interviews, my understanding of the relationship between photographs and memory in the context of oral history interviews has evolved into a more expansive understanding of the role of photos. The photographs often led to anecdotes about the family or about a family member. These anecdotes were not always particular to Camp and often blurred with the pre- and post-Camp years. The role of photographs can help us understand how they are attributed meaning by the speaker and demonstrate the agency of the speaker in reframing the photograph to represent a family story or family member rather than connect it to the place of the photo (the Camps). In making sense of the uses of photographs in the oral history performance, we can better understand the role of photographs by conceptualizing them as a prop within the performative space of the oral history interview. That is,

photographs are not just objects that happen to be in the interview. Instead, props serve a specific purpose and enhance the performance. In viewing the photographs as props, it elucidates the way that photographs allow for memories, which are by nature nonlinear and incomplete, to appear cohesive. The way the speakers used the photograph demonstrates the ways that as a prop, the photograph is not solely about what is in the photo; instead, the photograph is about identity and memory. Throughout the oral history interview performance, props were used at pivotal Moments that carried the interview performance and allowed for seamless acts of remembering and forgetting. This chapter contains implications about the role of photographs in the memory process and suggests that photographs, although traditionally viewed as devices to remember, are also conducive to forgetting.

Legitimization of Voice

Within the memory space in which the speaker is performing, we can further explore the ways that the legitimization of one's voice and memories occur. As someone from a younger generation who has expressed interest in learning about the experiences of an older, presumably wiser generation, my relatives were aware that I was looking to them to fill memory voids that I could not fill myself. In retrospect, I am able to understand the pressure this may have placed on them and how it may have led them to the insecurities about their own memories.

Throughout the oral history interview process, it became apparent that the individuals I spoke with wanted to be helpful. More specifically, they wanted to be able to answer my questions and to provide me with the most accurate information they could. These underlying desires were present even before the interviews took place. For

example, in the process of asking my relatives to speak with me and setting up a time to do so, I received hesitant responses that expressed a fear that they did not remember enough or would not be able to give me the information I was looking for. After reassuring each person that I was not "looking for" anything in particular and that anything and everything they remembered would be perfect, I was able to allay my relatives' fears and convince them that their memories, however scattered or incomplete, were of great interest to me. Despite my best efforts to reassure them that I was not looking for anything specific and that it was okay if they did not remember everything, there was a tendency for speakers to cite outside sources during their interviews by using phrases such as "I read….". The following example taken from my interview with Mary Freeman demonstrates how speakers referenced an external authority:

> yeah
> and it was dark
> seems to me like we just took an extra long time
> and that part was true because I
> read just the other day
> it was an extra long time
> it seemed like
> like
> and it says it looked like the
> the reading said it seemed like
> where we were the day before
> it was getting dark
> but we're still in the desert
> cuz we have to keep on
> uh
> going back and forth as if
> changing rails
> to let the other
> trains go by
> and um
> uh
> so it took an extra long time
> we can understand that
> but I thought that we

went
ended
not ended but
we
one of the places we went to I remember was Albuquerque New Mexico
and um
I thought it said they said Albuquerque New Mexico
ok

In these verses taken from the transcription of Mary's interview, she is using information from someone else to inform her own memories, as well as to pass information on to me that she trusts is real because it was in books. The part where Mary references reading about the train ride is relevant to a discussion about memory because here, Mary is using an outside source as a way to legitimize her own memory. Mary's insecurity and need to verify her own experience with an official record points to the fragile nature of memories and the doubt that surrounds the memory construction process. If Mary was unable to find a source that supported her own memory of the long train ride, does that mean her memory is incorrect? The referencing of books or other records of the Incarceration experience also has implications on how memories are constructed. For example, in Mary's interview, she begins with her own memory, uses something she read to verify her memory, then again returns to her own memory. Yet, in her description about the train ride, it becomes unclear as to whether she is speaking in the voice of the book she read or if she has returned to speaking from her own recollection. Regardless of whether she is retelling me what she remembers, or if she is retelling me what she read, the information she absorbs while reading outside sources informs and influences her memory by either reinforcing her memories or making her doubt them. This is significant because it suggests that while Mary's memories belong to

her, she is not the sole author of those memories and there are contextual/historical factors that affect memory construction.

As discussed in Chapter 1, memory is never solely an individual or collective process; rather, it is both individual and collective. This aspect of memory construction becomes relevant as we try to understand why speakers relied on other research to validate their memories of something with which they have first-hand experience. The validation of memories that Mary found in the books she read raises questions about the process of remembering: If memories need to be verified by someone else or a historical record, would Mary's memories be untruthful if they could not be corroborated? The unstable nature of the memory process has consequences on what is remembered, but it also influences those who are attempting to perform their memories and what they allow themselves to share with others. When speakers enter a memory space, the insecure relationship between an individual and their own memories can become magnified when the speaker is asked to remember in situations such as an oral history interview. The space of oral history interviews itself is unique because of the staged and explicit request for an individual's memories surrounding a historical event. In this request, speakers are aware of the authority that their words are given, and this authority on a particular subject or event can cause self-doubt or hesitance.

However, the photographs seemed to provide a memory space where the speaker could legitimize their authority and knowledge by being able to identify and name the people in a photograph. When seeing a photograph, the speaker's voice becomes legitimized when they are able to offer information about the photograph. This is important because even if the speaker has demonstrated a level of doubt about their

memories from their Camp experience, they are able to talk about the photograph in terms of the people in it, which is an area where they are confident and secure. Rather than being required to focus on the location and place (Camp) of the photograph, speakers can avoid confronting their insecurities around their memories and can instead offer stories about people that are disconnected from Camp memories. This suggests the tactical decisions make by the speakers to reclaim their authority by naming and reaffirming their relationship to the people in the photograph without having to navigate the fragile nature of their memories surrounding the possible trauma associated with their actual Camp experience. The following portion of Bill Kashiwase's interview illustrates how the tendency to name people instead of addressing other memories that could be associated with the photograph can occur:

LK: Are you in this one? is this you? *(show photos)*
BK: Henry Fujita
Mary
that must be Denny
Nancy and Gary
LK: Where was it taken?
BK: Must've been right in front of their house
their shack
LK: Were you allowed to have cameras?
BK:Yeah
oh yeah
(back to photographs)
thats Henry there
he came back
there James
yeah
yeah I guess that's James
my mother and father
Mary
Dennis Fujita

In this exchange, I present Bill with photographs and pose simple questions. In his response, Bill chooses to name the people in the photograph instead of elaborate on other

memories with which the photograph is associated. Providing the names of people in the photograph allows the speaker to avoid silence or pauses that could challenge their authority or delegitimize their voice, yet simultaneously allows them to direct their memories away from their memories of being in Camp towards their family members.

Referring back to the memory space occupied by the speaker can perhaps help us better recognize how the photographs are a site to not only legitimize voice, but to also maintain authority. If a speaker begins talking about something that makes them uncomfortable or that they no longer want to talk about, it would be difficult to say that to someone who is eagerly listening. The photographs allow for the speaker to seamlessly redirect the interview while maintaining their poise without having to make explicit statements of discomfort or avoidance, which could lead to uncomfortable silences. In the following verse from Denny Fujita's interview, he reflects on his memories of Camp in relation to his parents:

> They were sacrificing a lot just to shield us from the harshness of the conditions
> (*starts flipping through photos I brought)*

We see that Denny is acknowledging both the poor conditions of the Camp as well as the sacrifices his parents were forced to make. These feelings are likely derived from other memories, yet instead of elaborating, Denny turns to the binder of photographs. Again, the photographs provide something else to think about and allow Denny to veer away from his memories regarding the harshness of the Camps and the sacrifices of his parents. The photo in this instance is not just something to look at; instead, it serves a specific purpose and carries the interview performance even when there is an absence of words. As a prop, the photograph is almost an actor itself and can allow for the continuation of the performance even when the actor, or speaker, has chosen to stop speaking.

Family Memory Constituted Through Photographs

The performance that takes place around the photographs can be better understood through frameworks of family identity and family memory discussed in Chapter 1. A primary way that family memory shapes present memories is through the intergenerational communication of memories through photographs. So, while the speakers are choosing certain memories to anchor to the photographs, they are simultaneously influencing the memories I myself form in relation to the photographs. This intergenerational communication allows for the speaker to exercise agency over both how the photograph is used, as well as the stories that future generations will associate with the photograph. In particular, the decision for the speaker to highlight the people in the photograph rather than their experiences or memories associated with the photograph may reflect their recognition of the concept of family memory. For example, while each member of a family may have their own personal memories, there are often certain memories that are shared by all members of the family, and it is the shared memories that constitute family memory. If the speaker had focused on their personal memories in relation to the photo, it may be in contradiction to the memories that another family member holds. Since I am a family member of a younger generation, the speaker may have been conscious about the family memory that was transmitted to me. By focusing on the people, the speaker could talk about something that would be universally agreed upon by the family; whereas, if the speaker spoke about their personal memories of Camp, it would not necessarily be family memory. The interplay between what is photographed and the memories that emerge from the photograph are also tied to the way that memories transmit family identity and family stories. In Chapter 1, I cited Kuhn

(2007) as stating: "in most societies, family photographs have considerable cultural significance, both as repositories of memory and as occasions for performances of memory" (p. 284). In the oral histories interviews, the photographs become an opportunity for the performance of a certain family identity and family story to be narrated. Since the photographs taken in the Incarceration Camps seem to be conducive to the remembering of non-Camp-related memories, it becomes evident that individuals have agency in how they use photographs in the memory process by molding the photograph to fit the narrative or story they decide to share. Additionally, the role of the photos in the interview indicate that family memories and stories that emerge through the photographs are not always solely about the photograph itself, and are instead more about the family identity. The photograph, rather than a central object in the interview, is a prop that is used selectively for a purpose. The photograph exists in the performance to support the memories; the photographs are not the memories themselves.

Given the insecurity about Camp memories that appeared in the interviews, speakers steered clear of personal memories of Camp and instead focused on people or anecdotes that were not directly related to the Incarceration period. While oral history interviews and family photographs are conducive to sharing those memories that members of a family all share, it is also a space where families can create forgetting. Family memories, much like collective memory, are constructed and agreed upon versions of the family's history and identity. When a speaker looks at a photograph and shares memories from a time period different from that of the photo, it could possibly be a sign that forgetting is taking place through the act of remembering. For example, in my interview with Mary, one photograph leads her on an anecdote that is chronologically

removed from Camp, yet the photo seemingly triggered the memory. Looking at a photograph of the family in front of their barrack, Mary says:

MF: Oh the barrack
because he was right across the street from
Denny was born there
LK: Ohh Ok, I knew he was really young. I didn't know he was born there.
MF: She was expecting at the time that um
we were in Amache
I think he was born in April
uh when a lot of your cousins were born
in April
And um
she was Auntie Anne was uh
kinda showing
but she had a
what they call a princess lined
princess style coat
camel coat
she asked if we could trade because I had
Grandma Kashiwase
my mother had uh made uh camel coat only camel coat
and had a box
that was the style then
but she made it from some used
um
garment she had found that she could draft a pattern from that she could make me a coat that she got in um
we always went to the Salvation Army in San Francisco when we had to go for our annual dentist and
so uh mama drove
grandma drove
and you know that Grandpa didn't drive
so anyhow she would drive all the way to I thought to was Richmond
wherever we caught the ferry to go across
we had to go
she drove the car on passenger and car onto the ferry that would take us over the San Francisco Bay to San Francisco and that is where they had
they were
uh
that was their home
along with Anne and Dennis and EJ and uh my and Henry
and that was before they went to Livingston
They were going to make San Francisco their home
they had their businesses there

> so they had friends there also that they left behind but they always continued their friendship
> every year

It is possible that Mary is directly referencing Camp; however, she also diverges from Camp memories and engages memories from either pre- or post-Camp times. The aspect of the photograph that Mary chooses to engage is her sister's coat. By focusing on the coat, the memories that the photo produces are family stories that do not necessarily have direct ties with the Incarceration Camps. In fact, the memories that Mary shares involve those from a time when the family was able to move freely across bridges, on ferries, and through other cities. The story that Mary shares informs myself, as the listener, about a family history that involves family trips to the Salvation Army and information about where the Kashiwase family lived. This story of the family history does not include information about where the photo was taken: Amache, the Incarceration Camp in Colorado.

This decision to engage a particular aspect of the photograph to remember and talk about could be tied to presenting and performing a certain family identity and history to the listener of the memories. In choosing what to remember, the forgetting of memories that do not match the family identity occurs. Additionally, this raises questions as to the strategic decisions made when the photograph was snapped. In thinking about agency, we must consider that the photograph appears to present happy and peaceful times because the photo was not taken with the intent of making a statement about the Incarceration experience. Instead, perhaps, the photograph focuses on people because those are the memories that are intended to be captured and presented. If this is a possibility, we can see that the photographs inform memory, but memory also informs

the photographs. By this, I mean to suggest as a possibility that the photographs present a particular version of Camp, and it is because of what is photographed that people are allowed to remember and forget certain things. By having people be at the center of the photographs, they become conducive to creating memories about people rather than Camp. In the same way, the patterns identified may suggest that photographs play an important role in the forgetting process.

Using Photographs to Redirect and Reframe

Speakers are able to perform acts of remembering and forgetting by redirecting the focus of their memories to the photos. This tendency to use photographs as a prop that allows for the seamless transition between topics and types of memories helps to make sense of the malleable and nonlinear nature of memory. The following verses from my interview with Mary demonstrate one instance where the photographs were used to change the direction of the conversation and guide it away from the 442nd infantry:

MF:The fact they allowed uh
uh 442nd
for them to join
form an infantry
and uh
segregated
and I liked um General Kim
he's a Korean
and the man
I don't know who it was
he said well you don't want to be with them
you know because I know how Koreans and Japanese don't like each other
he didn't know what he was talking about he says this group is good enough for me so he stayed with them so he's the kind of hero
hero to the ones that served under him
um yeah
because all the others were White officers
and he stuck with them so his story is their story
I thought that was

yeah
LK: That's pretty cool
MF: But these were some other pictures
(looking back to the binder of photos I brought)

Mary shares a story about the 442nd infantry and General Kim. After sharing this story and information, she starts to explain her own feelings about the story and why the story is significant to her ("Yeah I though that was"), yet she does not finish this statement. Instead, she says "yeah" as if to signal to me that she has said all she wants to say on the topic. Staying on the topic of the story she shared, I made a statement in reference to General Kim, but instead of continuing with this line of thought, Mary chooses to direct my attention to the binder of photographs I brought. In this portion of Mary's interview, it seems that she is able to speak openly about the 442nd and is happy to share the story of General Kim with me, yet when the opportunity for her to offer her opinions about the story or to reflect on it presents itself, she does not allow her mind to go there and instead uses the photographs as a way to change the subject rather seamlessly. Perhaps continuing to talk about General Kim and the 442nd encourages Mary to remember things that she does not wish to revisit at the time such as the implicit link between the existence of the 442nd infantry and the Incarceration and discrimination against Japanese Americans.

The inclination to turn to photographs to change the subject is also evident in my interview with Moses Oshima. In responding to a question that asked what the barracks were like, he says:

Basically I'd say
terrible
it was an improvement over the
being in Tanforan
that was horrible

imagine
I think one of my sister's
(back to photos)
Yaho
no that's Bill
Marty
and I'm not sure who that is

When Moses answered the question posed, it felt like he was prepared to elaborate on his description of the barracks as "terrible," but he then turns to the photographs and begins naming the individuals in the photograph. Unsure if he was sidetracked or purposefully changed the subject, I prompted him by asking, "You were saying something about one your sisters?" His response follows:

The way it happened
Miye
that's the oldest in the family
she went
she relocated to Minneapolis Minnesota
okay
and uh and then she
she became uh
connected and uh
she finally married EJ
see EJ was there first and he sent for Miye
(back to photos)
I don't know who this is
and it was amazing because that way EJ and Miye were able to keep the family together

Moses spoke about one of his sisters, Miye, but he did not seem to connect it to his previous statements. He originally said "Imagine. I think one of my sister's," but when I prompted him to follow up on that phrase, he told a story about one of his sisters that did not seem to be connected to the barracks, Assembly Center, or horrible conditions. Instead, the story he told was one that highlighted the way the family was able to stay together. In this case, it seems like the photographs allowed for a break in the

conversation, which in turn made it easier for Moses to change the narrative he was telling. His switch from saying something negative about the barracks to highlighting how well the family stayed together did not seem odd at the time of the interview because the photographs had provided a natural interruption that could be used to pivot the topic of the conversation. This same combination of using the photograph to allow for a shift in the topic of what is being remembered is again seen a couple lines later in Moses' interview:

> See EJ would be from the Kashiwase side and Miye was the Oshima side
> um there are memories that we have of the actual Oshima family
> that's from Japan and uh
> very
> we have very few memories of that because of the war
> This is very cute *(referencing a photograph)*
> I think
> I'm not sure though
> I think this is Yaho
> and this is probably Bill
> that's Marty and that's Miye.
> My sister Miye took over and kept the family together

Moses explains that he has limited memories about the Oshima family because of the war, but instead of continuing on the topic of the war or of lost memories because of the war, he draws attention to a photograph. Again, the pattern of naming the people in the photographs can be seen, as well as the shift to a more positive narrative. Moses then expresses a more solemn sentiment, yet after naming the people in the photograph we see him once again mention how well the family was kept together. This interaction between Moses, his memory, and the photographs indicate that the photographs are useful in allowing Moses to reframe or avoid certain memories. Additionally, the photographs allow for a smooth transitions between otherwise disconnected topics without appearing

abrupt or misplaced. Here, the photograph serves as a sort of glue that maintains the cohesiveness of the interview, despite the many detours that occur through the memory process.

Forgetting Through Photographs

The way that the speakers used the photographs in the oral history interviews have implications on the nature of memory, which encompasses aspects of both remembering and forgetting. The fact that when the speakers use the photographs, they use them to focus on people, rather than the location or place of Camp, is perhaps reflective of one of the many ways that the ambiguities inherent to photographs allow for forgetting. Recall the discussion about photographs in Chapter 1 where the elusiveness of both photographs and memory were addressed. While a photograph holds much promise in terms of providing a record of an event, it also magnifies the fluid nature of memory. As we saw in the oral history interviews, the speakers chose to focus on the people in the photograph rather than the location or event that was photographed. The ability for the speaker to choose which aspect of the photograph to address demonstrates the ability for photographs to be conducive to the remembering of certain things, but also to their power in allowing people to forget. If the photo is orally captioned by the speaker with the names of people and sometimes even anecdotes about those people, by default, forgetting can occur. The place where the photograph was taken is not acknowledged, which allows for the memories surrounding the photo to be the primary way in which the photograph is remembered and narrated in the future. Through the intergenerational telling and retelling of a caption that highlights the people and stories

about those people rather than stories about the Camp, the Camp experience can be forgotten through the remembering of other aspects of the photograph.

Similarly, photographs may cause us to remember memories that we wish to not remember or cause us to return to a place that we are emotionally unarmed to return to. In these situations, photographs may help in the process of forgetting by providing an outlet through which to remember something else, something more pleasant and less painful to the individual. For example, when the speakers in the oral histories hone in on the people in the photograph rather than their own memories about the Camp experience, they are actively engaging in the process of forgetting through the act of remembering something else. When the speaker chooses to engage in an anecdote about a person in the photograph and the anecdote is not connected to a Camp experience, the photograph is again intervening in the memory process and allowing for certain memories to be remembered while others forgotten. The forgetting that takes place during the oral history interviews may also point to the trauma that the speakers experienced and the act of forgetting, or not sharing, may be evidence that trauma cannot be easily translated into spoken words. Perhaps, forgetting in the interviews was indicative of both the malleable nature of memory and photographs, as well as the inaccessibility of trauma. By this, I mean to suggest that the acts of forgetting can offer insight into how trauma is expressed (or not expressed) and the link that exists between forgetting as it relates to the presence of trauma. While forgetting can occur through what is said, the presence of trauma necessitates that the forgetting that occurs through silence is equally as significant as other forms of forgetting. Here questions regarding the type of forgetting taking place in the interviews must be opened because the boundaries between willful, purposeful

forgetting and the less conscious forgetting that indicates trauma through what is not said become more defined.

Echoing Marianne Hirsch's (1997) concept of postmemory, sociologist Eviatar Zerubavel (1996) addresses acts of remembering that occur about events we did not experience. He states: "Indeed, being social presupposes the ability to experience events that had happened to groups and communities to which we belong long before we joined them as if they were part of our past…" (Zerubavel, 1996, p. 290). Such a statement resonates with my own understanding of memory because memory and what we remember is not a direct process with what we have experienced. Before the interactions about Camp with my relatives, my memories were almost exclusively constructed in my mind. Now, my understanding of the Camps has been complicated through the way that my relatives communicated their experience to me in the oral history interviews. Hirsch (1997) explains the importance of photographs in postmemory: "Photographs in their enduring umbilical connection to life are precisely the medium connecting first-and-second generation remembrance, memory and postmemory" (Hirsch, 1997, p. 28). Photographs, as a primary vehicle for transmitting memory between generations, do not offer complete explanations. Instead, they offer a foundation from which memory can be constructed and postmemory can operate. During my interviews, the photographs were a tangible common ground between my relatives and me. Through the photographs, they were able to share their memories of Camp, even if at times, their narrative did not directly relate to the photographs. Through the interaction that took place through and with the photographs, the memories my relatives communicated to me became anchored

to that photograph in my mind and thus affected how I will remember the Camp photographs in the future.

While photographs serve as a key for remembering, understanding the relationship between memories and photographs, we must also acknowledge the possibility that photographs are an integral part of forgetting and are not solely used to remember. Additionally, the forgetting that occurs is complex and does not mean to necessarily imply that the forgetting is always intentional and premeditated. We must also accept that forgetting and the absence of words can also point to the presence of trauma and supports the view that trauma cannot be easily expressed. While at times the photograph may be used strategically to redirect memories, the photographs should also be recognized for the void they fill when a memory cannot be articulated. The role of the photographs and their relationship to memory must be complicated beyond the view that photos are mnemonic devices; instead, they also embrace the nonlinearity of memory and may even aid in the forgetting process. The photographs in the interviews not only allowed, but also embraced, the fragmented nature of the memory process. That is, the fragmented nature of memories appeared less fragmented because of the ways the photographs was used as props to help the listener follow the performance.

CHAPTER 4

IDENTITY AND MEMORY

Role of Parents (Issei) in Interview

Through oral history interviews with my relatives, I was able to directly access the words of the Nisei; however, I also gained access to the memories of the Issei through the Nisei. The Issei are no longer here to express their stories and their memories, but through the memories of the Nisei, I am able to better understand how the Issei may have experienced Camp. The presence of the Issei throughout the oral history interviews is evidenced in the Nisei's references to the experience of their parents; however, the Issei also seem to have an enduring influence on the interviews and, in turn, the memories that the Nisei form in relation to their Camp experience. In this sense, the Issei are like ghosts that are always lingering and influencing the entire interview process. The memories that the Nisei shared are their own, but at the same time, the memories they formed about Camp are constructed through their parents. The parents of the speakers, the Issei, appear throughout the interview, which points to the way that the Nisei have formed and expressed memories about Camp both because of and through their parents.

The Issei and Nisei may have experienced the Camps in profoundly different ways because of their age difference. For example, think back to your childhood years and you may remember school friends, extracurricular activities, and play dates. For the Nisei, these are some of the same memories they may have of their time in Camp;

however, for the adult Issei, being uprooted and moved into Camp would be an entirely different experience likely not dominated by pleasant experiences. This suggests that perhaps some of the Nisei did not detest or resent their time in Camp because they viewed their experience through the lens of a child. For the Nisei children, they did not know what could be and therefore, their memories of the actual Camp may not be entirely negative. Alternatively, the Issei, more aware of the situation and discrimination taking place, may have experienced Camp differently from the Nisei. Based on the interviews I conducted, it seems possible that the Nisei have formed their negative associations to the Camp in the years following the Incarceration as they matured and began to understand the experience through the eyes of an adult rather than a child.

In the oral history interviews, the Issei enable the Nisei to articulate negative emotions about the Camps, which provides the Nisei with a space to express an experience that they themselves may never have experienced. Here, the tension between the lived experience of the Nisei in Camp and the emotionally traumatic underpinnings of the experience are brought to the forefront through the inclusion of negative memories mediated by their parents' experiences. This mediation is perhaps providing the Nisei with an opportunity to legitimize their voice on a seemingly untranslatable experience. By this, I mean to suggest that trauma often presents itself in what is not said. Because of the challenges the Nisei face in articulating their own trauma, it could be easier to articulate the trauma they believe their parents suffered. Through expressing the trauma suffered by their parents, the Nisei are, in a way, able to access their own trauma. While this access is not complete, it offers insight into possible ways that individuals manage trauma, as well as the way that the experience of another can and does inform memory.

Denny Fujita was born in Camp, so his ability to legitimize and articulate his own experience becomes heavily dependent on his parents. Denny reflects on the burden his mother endured in Camp:

> My mother as far as Camp is concerned
> uh she was of course tied down with the care of my older brother Gary and Nancy
> lets see 1942 Gary would have been 4 years old
> Nancy would've been about 2
> um
> so I think while others may have gotten involved in some of the social affairs of the Camp
> and maybe involved in athletics or that sort of thing
> my mother was really burdened with caring for kids
> plus being pregnant with me

This portion of the interview is interesting because Denny mentions the "social affairs" of the Camp, yet because of his age, these are social affairs that Denny does not have access to. So, while he can think about those happier, social aspects of Camp, his ability to speak about them personally is confined. However, he is able to legitimize his voice on the Camp experience through his parents. Specifically, his Mother, an Issei, intervenes in his memories because of her inability to participate in those aspects of Camp. Instead of speaking about the social affairs, Denny instead establishes his opinion through the experience of his Mother. Denny again returns to his parents as he tries to explain his relationship to the Camps:

> I just wonder how well
> the rest of the family was
> my parents in particular how
> how well they were being taken care of
> they were sacrificing a lot just to shield us from the harshness of the conditions

In his attempt to reconstruct the Camps in his mind, Denny focuses on his parents and their experience. Again, the Issei, although not present for the interview, find ways to influence the memories that the Nisei remember and share. Denny expresses an

inclination that his parents were not well cared for and acknowledges the sacrifices that his parents made in order to protect him and his brother and sister. These memories, while not of his own experience, still haunt the memories he has of the Camps.

The appropriation of their parents' experience when expressing negative emotions about the Camps is tied to the position of the Issei in prewar America. As discussed in Chapter 1, the Issei faced heavy discrimination in the postwar years. They were not allowed to become United States citizens and they were prohibited from owning land, all of which collectively excluded the Issei from ever being seen as Americans. However, the Issei wanted their children, the Nisei, to take advantage of the opportunity they were given as United States citizens. For this reason, Nisei were raised to be Americans both by country of birth and culturally. Given the fortunate position that the Nisei occupied because of their citizenship, Mary Kashiwase expresses that her pain about the Incarceration period is not so much about herself; rather, it is about her parents. She explains to me:

> But I was one of those that was kind of
> really hurt
> and it wasn't so much for me but
> my parents
> they did
> and other parents
> all of them sacrificed so much
> and they had to put up with
> I said it's easier for us
> we were born and we you know
> speak the language
> and all that but THEY
> they come from another culture and all this and they had to assimilate

Mary uses the "I" pronoun to define her own experience, yet I also see her make the transition into using her parents as a vehicle through which to elaborate on her own

feelings about the Camp. Although Mary is still speaking about her memories of Camp, she clearly states that the hurt she felt was informed by the experience of her parents and the other Issei. Mary's acknowledgement of her parent's sacrifices sheds light on the awareness that the Nisei had of the prewar discrimination faced by the Issei. Mary recognizes the sacrifices her parents made in order to provide a better life for their children, the Nisei, as well as the efforts made by the Issei to be American and to assimilate into American society. While Mary feels hurt over the Incarceration experience, this excerpt points to the possibility that her hurt is not solely about something she herself endured; rather, it is also based on what she feels her parents endured. Instead of following the phrase, "But I was one of those that was kind of really hurt" with a memory about something that she personally felt or experienced, she chooses to focus on her parents and articulate her hurt through the experience of the Issei.

The Issei are also a means through which the speaker can express a collective disapproval about the Camps by first focusing on the experience of their parents. On multiple occasions, Mary begins talking about her parents in order to show me the injustices that occurred, yet she is able to make the jump from her parents to the collective or "everybody" while still remaining under the guise of her parents, the Issei:

> I thought gee you know
> she and my father
> was my parents
> all the parents
> but then I thought
> my parents
> and all of them
> none of us have any business being there
> our parents had
> well it turns out that
> we lost a lot you know
> their years

they had to start all over again
and
and I don't know
the losses were great for everybody
but its not just my parents
when I thought about it after you know, it was EVERYBODY
ALL all our families

Parents seemed to be a topic where negative feelings about the Camp could be more freely expressed. When speaking about their parents, the Nisei seemed to take a stronger stance on the injustice of the Camp and explicitly acknowledge that what happened to Japanese Americans was wrong. Although the focus is not always solely on the parents, the parents tend to lead the way to more general statements about the loss and injustices associated with the Camp experience. Even though Mary ends her statement using "everybody" and "all our families," those sentiments began with focusing on her parents.

As the Nisei began to grapple with their Camp experience and understand its complexities, they have become more aware of how their parents may have felt during the Incarceration period, which heavily influenced the construction of their own memories of the time. This leads to a potential disconnect between the Nisei's feelings and memories of the Camp with the experience of their parents and the larger significance behind the Incarceration. The following excerpt from my interview with Moses Oshima can perhaps shed light on this apparent tension between the experience of the Nisei and the memories they constructed about the Camps through their parents. While looking at photographs from the family's time in Camp, Moses says:

Yeah
these bring up terrific memories
And that's Grandpa Oshima
I never seen this one before
this particular one
this period of evacuation was very difficult for father and my mother

it was very difficult

Initially, Moses associates positive memories with his Camp experience. However, after identifying his Mother and Father in the photographs, his memories shift to a more negative association with the Camps via the perceived experience of his Mother and Father. In the span of several seconds, Moses' recollection of the Camp shifts from "terrific memories" to "it was very difficult," and this shift occurs as his thoughts become embedded within the narrative of his parents' experience. It is through the ghost of the Issei that the Nisei are able to articulate their disapproval of the Camps.

Expressions of Guilt and Justification

Many Issei would not speak about the Camps in the years following the war; in fact, it was not until 30 or 40 years after the war that the Issei felt like they had a space where they could share their experience. The reasons for the Issei's silence likely varied from individual to individual with the reasons ranging from shame, anger, pain, trauma, and/or self-preservation among countless others. Even without the explicit words of the Issei, the Nisei could sense how their parents were feeling, and perhaps it was with age that the Nisei began to think about and consider the sacrifices that their parents made for them both before and during their Incarceration Camp experience.

The Nisei's focus on their parents when expressing anger or disapproval about the Incarceration period could be predicated on the guilt they feel for not standing up for their parents when they were forced into the Camps. The guilt the Nisei feel and the tendency to justify why they did not speak out against the Camps may implicate the memory process by suggesting that the memories of Camp held by the Nisei were constructed in the years following their time in Camps as the Nisei began to understand

their families' Incarceration from an alternative perspective and in relation to their own identity as Americans. During their Camp time, younger Nisei may not have been aware of or understood what was happening, and older Nisei were able to leave Camp to either work or join the military. However, in the years following the war, the Nisei were able to better understand both what happened to them, as well as to their parents. With age and more life experience, the Nisei were perhaps able to form new memories about the Camp that contradicted or were in tension with their memories from the own experience.

Understanding the challenges that the Issei faced and the way they were treated by the government seems to resonate with the Nisei on a very emotional level and cause them to offer explanations for why they did not stand up for their parents. One way of making sense of the justifications the Nisei offer about why they did not protest or speak out against the Camps is through the memory construction process. In my interview with Aiko Oshima, she provides her current perspective on the Camps:

> Um from what I understand and stood,
> of course they voiced their opinion saying it was wrong because we're citizens,
> we're Americans
> but being because it was war,
> and
> if you were underage,
> you had to go into Camp
> mhmm
> yeah
> and my parents
> of course said it was wrong
> but they would go like this *(shrugs shoulders)*
> and say this is something
> that we can't help,
> you know

In her explanation, Aiko recognizes that the Nisei were citizens, yet she also offers the reasoning that even as citizens, many Nisei had a very limited range of choices. She uses

the wartime period and the age of some of the Nisei to make sense of the circumstances and the decision to go along with the Incarceration. However, she also alludes to the idea that her parents were aware that they were unable to change the situation because of their position as Issei, and that they did not necessarily expect their children to fight for them. The inability for the Nisei to speak out on behalf of all those incarcerated, both citizens and noncitizens, has emerged as a significant topic in the Nisei's memories of Camp.

The guilt that the Nisei express can be understood as a product of the interaction of the past and present in the memory construction process. That is, the perspective that Nisei hold of the Camps in the present may not be identical to the memories they had of the Camps in the years immediately following their release. Instead, their memories of Camp have been shaped through reflection and critical assessment of what they experienced as they matured and tried to make sense of what happened to the Japanese American community. Talking with Moses Oshima, he provides his current assessment of what happened and explains why he does not think the same type of injustice could be carried out today:

> Probably what happened to
> OUR GENERATION
> of which you're just finding out about it
> is that
> it probably couldn't happen again now
> because you know
> with all the
> dissemination of information and so forth
> this younger generation wouldn't allow it

Moses attributes "the dissemination of information" as something that could have prevented the Incarceration Camps from happening and acknowledges the "younger generation" that would speak out and prevent it from happening. Through his words, it

seems like Moses is explaining and justifying why the Nisei did not speak out against the implementation of the Camps. He implicitly argues that if there had been more dissemination of information in the 1940s, the Camps would not have happened. Perhaps even more telling is his reference to the younger generation. At the time, the Nisei were the younger generation, and perhaps this is his way of acknowledging that it was his generation's job to stand up for their parents.

So, while the Nisei may have been in the appropriate position as citizens to speak out on behalf of their parents, they were not of an age where they were able to fully grasp the gravity of the situation. Instead, it is in the experiences and individual evolution that has taken place since their Incarceration that the Nisei have been able to grasp the bind their parents were in and the efforts their parents made to protect them from the reality of their situation. Aiko uses both the past and present tense of the word "understand." The use of past and present tense shows how Aiko's process of remembering is not just based on the past, but the present and all the years in between also influence her memories.

Denny offers insight into how the realization that his parents were essentially American in every way except citizenship has shaped his own perspective on the Camp. In his interview, he states:

> So I never really felt very Japanese
> knowing my parents never acted like they were anything than just Americans

While he does not elaborate on what feeling Japanese would look like, it does indicate that the way his parents raised him and the life he created thereafter was rooted in the idea of how an American would live. Through his own identity as an American, the idea that his parents, who he knew always acted like Americans, were incarcerated is something that may cause an uneasy feeling. However, we can make sense of Denny's

expression through an understanding of the remorse that Nisei may feel about not being able to prevent the hardships their parents endured. Denny makes reference to the efforts of the Issei to protect the Nisei, especially in the years following the closing of the Incarceration Camps. The Issei's focus was making life for their children, the Nisei, as easy as possible following the war, which often included an emphasis on assimilation and achieving individual success through hard work and perseverance.

Through the oral history interviews, the influence of memory on identity, and of identity on memory, becomes apparent. Denny, a Nisei, reflects:

> Knowing my parents never acted like they were anything than just Americans
> and somewhat bewildered about the chain of events that occurred to them
> but their focus was on getting reestablished
> providing us the best environment they could think of
> to fit in

Denny shows his awareness that his parents were loyal to the United States and did not agree with their Incarceration, yet because I know Denny was born in Camp, it is possible that these feelings developed in the post-Camp years. The memories that the Nisei formed about Camp in the years following the Incarceration period are informed by the identity that they manufactured, embraced, and lived. For example, Denny lives his life much like any other "typical" successful American—he owns a home, raised a family, and had a successful career as a chemistry professor. This model of the "American Dream," however, was evident in my family before their Incarceration.

Nisei Identity and Memory Process

There are multiple ways of defining and understanding what the term "American" means and what it represents. My use of "American" refers to American in the ideological sense, which means I am using the term "American" to encompass the traits

and characteristics of perseverance, self-reliance, and individualism. This use of the term "American" is not meant to propose a singular definition; instead, it is used because it is central to my family's construction of their past and present. The American identity and the outward expression of being a "good American" is a centripetal force in the narrative presented by my relatives in their interviews.

For many Japanese families that were incarcerated, their experience before, during, and after the war are characterized by assimilation into mainstream American society and the outward expression of loyalty to the United States through the enactment of the qualities of a "good citizen" and "loyal American." Even prior to their Incarceration, the Kashiwase, Oshima, and Fujita families lived a typical American life—immigrant parents built a new life through hard work, provided for their families, and raised their children as members of American society and culture. In many ways, their failures and successes exemplified the American attitude of resilience even prior to their Incarceration. My Grandpa, EJ, was able to begin college at the University of California Berkeley as he pursued the "American Dream." Then, when Executive Order 9066 was signed, the Japanese continued exhibiting resilience and the outward expression of their American-ness as is evidenced in the activities in the Camps, which included baseball, Boy Scouts, Drill Team, and other activities associated with mainstream American Society. So even during a period where the Issei and Nisei were incarcerated because of their Japanese ancestry, their material expression of their identity was thoroughly American.

Then in years following the war, the life trajectory of my relatives has more or less followed the "American Dream" and "Good American" identity that proliferated

after World War II. These aspects of their identity are reinforced by both the material conditions of their lives and the ideal characteristics of an "American" that emerged out of the war. In the post-Camp years, many of my relatives went on to live the "American Dream" in many ways—going to college, having successful careers, overcoming obstacles, and raising families. These qualities are representative of those addressed by critical communication scholar Barbara Biesecker (2002) in her critical analysis of the public emergence of World War II in the present. She (2002) says that the characteristics of "self-reliance, self-discipline, and self-sacrifice" became central to the notion of "the greatest generation" and a hallmark of their generation's American identity (Biesecker, 2002, p. 400). These themes of "self-reliance" and "self-discipline" come up throughout the interviews in the form of allusions to the financial, educational, and social success of the Kashiwase, Oshima, and Fujita families post-Camp. In this sense, the accumulation of "American capital" strengthens their ties to an American identity predicated on the conceptualization of a "good American" as someone who overcomes obstacles and defies odds despite "physical disability, economic privation, gender oppression, or racial and ethnic discrimination" (Biesecker, 2002, p. 400).

While this chapter takes the Nisei identity as a central factor in the construction of their Camp memories, it is not an attempt to confine or essentialize Nisei identity. Rather, it is an exploration of the Nisei identity as constructed by my relatives. Through this exploration of identity, we may be able to better understand the link between identity and memory and their implications on one another. Throughout the proceeding section, I will attempt to remain sensible to the multiplicity of identity as proposed by Nobel Prize–winning economist Amartya Sen (2007). Sen (2007) cautions against viewing others as

having a single identity and instead encourages the recognition of each person's multiple affiliations. In the oral history interviews, the multiple affiliations of the Nisei emerge in and through the interaction between the mental and material conditions of my relatives (Nisei) and their memory construction process.

For my relatives, it is possible that the experiences of their past and the material conditions of their present are oppositional, which lends itself to acts of both remembering and forgetting. For example, although the identity of those I interviewed is both fluid and complex, it is important to be cognizant that the notion of what it means to be American has been expressed through their life paths, as well as in the construction of their memories about the Camps. Through the mutual relationship between memory and identity expressed through the oral history interviews, we can better understand how memory and identity are a co-constitutive process.

Following the war period, the Nisei identity posed complications in terms of how the Camp experience is remembered. As previously discussed, the Nisei seem to occupy a unique position in that their experiences in the Camps do not always involve negative memories; in fact, it is possible that because of their young age or their ability to leave Camp on work or military leaves, they sometimes have positive memories of their actual Camp experience. Nonetheless, these memories become complicated in the post-Camp years as the Nisei begin to construct memories through the Issei. An example is the negative emotions of guilt that the Nisei feel over their silence during the Camp period discussed earlier in this chapter. The Incarceration Camps heavily influenced the Issei in the post-Camp years to assimilate and perform an American identity for themselves, which is something that the Nisei also adopted. However, the Nisei were citizens and

had always been citizens, so their efforts to stay loyal and true to the American aspect of their identity were challenged by the very existence of the Camps.

The Japanese American identity is heavily influenced by the Incarceration experience, yet at the same time, that experience is one that is often remembered through acts of forgetting. By this, I mean that as the Nisei remember their own and their families' Camp experiences, they are reaffirming Japanese American identity while simultaneously forgetting aspects of the Camp that do not fit the American aspect of their identity. Here, we can see how memories inform identity and how they are constructed to meet the needs of the present.

Throughout the interviews with my relatives, it is clear that they view themselves as both American and Japanese. The Incarceration Camp experience is perhaps the strongest tie they have to Japan, aside from their parents. Yet even their parents remained loyal throughout the years of their Incarceration, as Moses Oshima explains as he talks about his Mother:

> And the way Grandma Oshima kept things together
> is that
> and to show you how difficult that job was
> is that grandma Oshima had to stand up for the United States while she was in the Camps there

Moses, fully aware of his parents' position in the United States and their Incarceration, finds reason to remember his Mother's loyalty to the United States in a positive light. Rather than look at his Mother's loyalty as wrong or a sign of weakness, Moses highlights her support of the United States as representative of the strength of his Mother. Moses perhaps purposefully forgets the codified discrimination against his parents by the

United States by choosing to remember his family's story of strength and how his Mother kept the family together in Camp and remained loyal to the United States.

It is possible that the memories that Moses links to his Camp experience can function to nullify the injustice committed against Japanese Americans. This in turn allows the Nisei to fully embrace their American identity. In addition to his narrative about the strength of his Mother, Moses also shares EJ and Miye's ability to buy a "nice house" in Montclair (known as a nice area in California). In doing this, he is able to counteract the losses suffered by Issei and Nisei, as well as highlight the perseverance of Japanese Americans because of their ability to overcome the odds against them and be financially successful. Although we can recognize multiple dimensions of my relatives' identities, we can also understand how the Nisei's efforts to become assimilated and embrace their American identity is rooted in historical context and social constructions of how a "good American" acts. Despite their Incarceration and the discrimination against them by their own government, the great American trait of resiliency can be enacted through the current everyday lives of my relatives and reinforced through the way that remembering and forgetting occurs in their oral history interviews.

Dimensions of Forgetting

Given the ways that the Nisei have constructed their American identity to represent resilience and perseverance, they use purposeful, strategic forgetting to maintain their current status. The Nisei can make sense of their American identity and their Camp experience through the stories they tell about Camp and what they choose to remember and forget. In addition to using their parents to articulate painful memories,

one way that the Nisei can neutralize their Camp experience is by focusing on the positive aspects of Camp. Moses Oshima shares the following opinion about Camp:

> On the whole
> Camp life was very decent
> our schools were very well run and you wonder how you say to yourself
> were they able to get teachers
> a lot of them were Quakers

Here, Moses presents Camp as a "decent" experience. Remembering Camp as "decent" perhaps allows the forgetting of the less ideal aspects of Camp. Throughout Moses' interview, he does mention things about Camp that are negative, yet when he makes a statement about the overall experience, he chooses to characterize it as "decent." Here, the act of remembering the overall experience in a particular way can overshadow or negate other less positive memories about the Camp experience. In addition to characterizing the Camps in a positive light, Aiko Oshima shared memories about her Camp experience that perhaps made it seem not quite as bad as others' experience. She was able to reframe the circumstances of Camp through a comparison of her own Camp to other Camps rather than through a comparison to those not incarcerated:

> In Amache our barracks on the outside
> were nice
> nicer from what I understand they had in Topaz
> because you see these have um
> I can't tell
> but I know that by uh looking at other things
> our Camp building on the outside were really nice

In this part of my interview with Aiko, she is not necessarily trying to make any assertions about the overall Camp experience; instead, she is offering an explanation for why her Camp experience may not be as bad as others. Aiko makes the claim that the Camp she was at was nicer than other Camps such as Topaz. This is an interesting

comparison because, in a way, the belief that her Camp was nicer than others may allow her to disregard or forget other negative stories that she may hear about Camp. Or, perhaps she is able to explain away the injustices of the Camps by reframing her memories in a way that focuses on the positives of her Camp such as her explanation of how her Camp was not as bad as the others and were nicer. Similar to Aiko, Mary offers the following assessment of her Camp in comparison to the Arkansas Camp:

> I guess you have to be thankful for what we got
> we got Amache

Mary is not necessarily saying that she is thankful for her Camp experience, but she is implying that her Camp experience may have been better than that of others, or not quite as bad. She is presenting a positive view of her own Camp by constructing a negative view of the Arkansas Camp. Mary herself was never at the Arkansas Camp, yet she has, through others, formed a memory about it that allows her to remember her own experience in a more positive light.

The stories about the Camps that Moses, Aiko, and Mary share are significant because they point to the possibility that in order for the Nisei to feel comfortable living as Americans, they have to find a way to nullify the Camp experience through the memories they choose to purposefully remember and forget. Furthermore, the possibility that the Nisei are reacting to later generations such as the Sansei and Yonsei also exists. As a Yonsei, there have been times when I questioned how my relatives could believe in a country that did not believe in them. However, the Nisei can affect my own memories about their Camp experience by neutralizing the reality of their Incarceration through the sharing of positive memories

Although the overall tone of Aiko's interview was not necessarily upbeat and

positive in regards to her memories of Camp, I found it interesting that when I asked if she wanted me to know anything else about the Camps, she responded with the following:

> Even though we were incarcerated we did have little block parties
> you know the older young people
> they would have parties and you know

She clearly expresses a desire to make me aware of the block parties even though this sentiment was not expressed in other parts of the interview. Perhaps my prompting her and asking if she wanted me to know anything else about the Camps encouraged her to reflect on how what she says shapes my own memories. It is interesting that she chooses to present a positive, almost fun view of the Camp when explicitly asked what else she wants to share with me rather than saying something negative. Because the Incarceration is central to the Japanese American identity, those who lived through it cannot negate its existence; however, like Aiko, they can deliberately remember certain aspects of the experience in order to allow themselves and others to purposefully forget the negatives.

Within the memories of Camp, the positive and negative memories are constantly interacting. At times, these interactions cause seemingly contradictory statements or inconsistent messages. Take for example the following portion of my interview with Aiko Oshima:

> umm, I learned to think about my own nationality
> according to my parents
> and where they grew up
> uh otherwise
> if I hadn't gone to Camp
> and living among my own race,
> I'm
> I'm better for it
> knowing that
> growing up

AS an American
AND of another nationality,
it places one in a very unique situation
and
to realize
how fortunate
that my parents did
come here
TO America
to start a new life

Initially, it appears that Aiko is identifying as Japanese, yet she reaffirms herself as both American and "another nationality." In working through this transcript of spoken words, Aiko seems to begin by implying that she sees herself as Japanese, yet she makes the claim that "she's better for it" in reference to the Incarceration period, and by the end, she is expressing gratitude that her parents came to America despite the fact that they were incarcerated. As Aiko is talking, she is making sense of her identity and forming a memory of the Camp. This apparent tension could be a sign that Aiko is making sense of her own identity and constructing her own memories as she is speaking with me.

While Aiko's narrative is more representative of an ongoing process, Moses is more explicit in his assessment of the Camp experience. In his interview, he imparts the following knowledge to me:

(slight upward inflection) BUT on the whole!
we came through fairly well
Ej and Miye were able to
buy that nice house up at Montclair

Moses refers directly to Camp by showing that the family survived Camp and left the experience in a relatively positive state. His choice to say that the family "came through fairly well" is perhaps an effort to construct particular memories about the Camp experience. He takes this a step further by mentioning the ability of EJ and Miye, my

grandparents, to "buy that nice house up at Montlcair." By sharing this memory about something that happened post-Camp, Moses is able to further the understanding that the Camps were not severely detrimental and continue his narrative of "we came through fairly well," a narrative supporting the family's perseverance.

As the previous examples have demonstrated, the forgetting in the interviews are at times, purposeful and strategic. In furthering the understanding of my relatives' attempts to mold the memories of the Camps to meet certain needs, the Nisei's preference about the language and terminology used to talk about the Camps allows for elaboration on the strategic nature of intentional forgetting. In my interview with Mary Freeman, I asked: "I've been doing my reading and some people call them Internment Camps, some say Incarceration Camps, and some say concentration Camps; which term do you think should be used?" Her response follows:

> When they had the tower
> the army
> Army MPs with
> who had
> were allowed to have the rifle and they were allowed to be up there and they were allowed to
> have the
> guarding us
> towards inside
> and
> you know
> it was
> it doesn't make sense you know
> to
> to say that it's not a concentration Camp so I think…

In this response, we can see the link between what Mary remembers and the language she chooses to refer to the Camps. The memories she is recalling involve guards and rifles, which leads to her reasoning that the Camps were concentration Camps. If Mary instead

remembered the block parties that Aiko mentioned in her interview, she may have reached a different conclusion about the terminology that should be used. Additionally, Mary's response to this question offers insight into her memories surrounding the Camp and the memories that she is comfortable sharing with others. Perhaps for Mary, the aspects of her identity that have been constructed around her self-concept as an American are not challenged if the Camps are looked at as an injustice and called concentration Camps. For her, it may be that embracing and acknowledging her experience is the best way for her to make sense of and work through her own identity and memories about the Incarceration Camps. However, this cannot be said to be the experience or desire of each individual who lived through the Incarceration period. Because memory is a process that can allow individuals to work through trauma and their relationship to their identity, I expected that the answer to this question would not be met with a uniform answer across all of my relatives. In contrast to Mary's answer to my question about which terminology should be used to refer to the Camps, Bill Kashiwase provides an alternative perspective:

> I don't know
> I guess Internment Camp is best
> that way it doesn't sound like we had to go (laughing)

Here, I think the significance of Bill's statements is in his explanation for why the Camps should be referred to as Internment Camps. Whereas Mary's reasoning for calling the Camps "concentration Camps" were tied to her memories of guards and rifles, Bill focuses less on how memories inform the terminology and more on how the terminology constructs memories. That is, Bill indicates that he would prefer to use the term "Internment Camp" because he believes that it evokes less harsh, or perhaps less embarrassing, images of the treatment of Japanese Americans. Through the conscious

selection of language, Bill is able to reframe the Camp experience in a way that is conducive to his present needs and to the perpetuation of the belief that the Camps were not an injustice based on ethnicity, a thought that the term concentration Camp may evoke.

From Bill's statements, it can be inferred that he feels a sense of shame about being forced into Camp, perhaps because he was and is and American. Calling the Camps Internment rather than concentration Camps, or even Incarceration Camps, allows for certain aspects of the Camp to be remembered and others to be forgotten. It is possible that calling the Camps Internment will be more conducive to positive memories about the experience, and in turn, will allow Bill the greatest sense of security in his identity as an American. In calling the Camps "Internment Camps," perhaps it becomes easier to forget those images of rifles and guard towers described by Mary.

Forgetting, a central theme in this chapter, has been illuminated as a complex process. While forgetting can occur as an inevitable function of remembering, it can also be willful and intentional, as well as an unconscious coping act. Perhaps in order to remember an event in a particular way, we must forget. Aiko offers insight into the multiple planes across which forgetting can occur:

> its hard to uh…
> it's hard to go back
> to certain remembrances
> because you've
> more or less pictured them out of your mind

While it is not clear *why* Aiko has "pictured" certain "remembrances" out of her mind, her statements do offer insight into the type of memories that are forgotten. For Aiko, she has trouble returning to Camp memories because she has forgotten them either

through the remembering of other memories or the purposeful avoidance of returning to such times. Here, it is possible that we can identify trauma through her inability to speak. While Aiko can recognize that she has actively "pictured" certain memories out of her mind, the evidence of trauma may be in her inability to express why she chose to forget. Aiko's recognition of forgetting signals trauma, yet as is common, she is not able to access and share that trauma. Instead, the trauma is present in the stories she does not tell, the words she does speak, and the emotions she does cannot translate into words. This points to the possibility that Aiko is experiencing a form of forgetting that is rooted in an effort to maintain distance from confronting her traumatic memories and emotions, rather than the more strategic forgetting explored throughout this chapter. Here, Aiko speaks in and through her silence on the topic. For example, in her interview, she also mentions that she has not looked at her Amache High School yearbook in a very long time. Although the yearbook itself may not contain painful memories, it may represent a time that Aiko would prefer not to return to because of its association and links to other memories of the Camp. While Aiko has tried to forget in order to allow herself to remember the Camp in a certain way, this is not the only strategy of memory used to reframe an experience based on personal needs. Take for example, the following excerpt from Moses' interview:

> there was only one major incident and there's a picture somewhere
> and this one fellow got too close to
> uh the barbed wire and
> um he was shot
> but other than that I don't think we had any incidents

Because of the few incidents of this nature that occurred at Topaz, the incident that Moses refers to is likely the shooting of James Wakasa. Throughout my own research on

the topic, there are numerous versions of this incident, or perhaps murder, depending on who tells the story. Some versions of how Wakasa was killed say that Wakasa did not understand English and was shot when he did not listen to the armed guard; others say his dog went outside the barbed wire and Wakasa was reaching under to pull the dog back into the Camp. Regardless of what happened, perhaps more relevant to understanding how memories are constructed, is how this story is remembered by different people. An investigation determined that Wakasa was within the barbed wire fence boundaries and that he was facing the sentry at the time he was shot. Despite such evidence, the military police officer was court marshaled but found not guilty. At the time, it would seem this event would be a point of great sadness and anger within the Topaz community. Because of this, it may be significant that the incident that Moses remembers does not evoke an emotional response and is a simplistic explanation of the event. Also significant is his connection between Wakasa's death and the statement that there were not many incidents. Through the linking of Wakasa's death with a positive view of the Camp, Moses is able to redeem the tragedy. Remembering the Wakasa situation in the manner he did may say more about the type of memories that Moses wishes to construct about the Camps than anything else.

While the memory process has allowed my relatives to each forget certain memories, we must consider what we know about memory as discussed in Chapter 1: it is not an individual effort. While Mary, Bill, Aiko, Moses, and Denny each have their own memories that inform and are informed by their own needs and identity, we cannot approach remembering or forgetting as an individual act.

Consider the use of the collective voice in the oral history interviews. In Moses' interview, he often talks about "our generation" when sharing memories about the Camps. The use of "our generation" provides what appears to be a united front that is shared by the entire generation. Similarly, Mary uses the pronouns "we" and "everybody" to talk about the losses suffered by the Japanese Americans during the Camp years. Again, these pronouns present those incarcerated as a collective group who share an experience. However, as I hope this chapter has shown, memories vary from person to person. So while they are not individual, they are not collective either. This tension becomes evident when a collective memory and an individual memory are in contention. When answering a question about what the Camps should be called (Internment, Incarceration, concentration), Mary begins her response with the following:

> I just went along with whatever
> I'm not going to make a big thing about it but I think
> it's more like
> when they put it…
> I don't like division

As discussed earlier, Mary goes on to say that the term "concentration Camp" is what she believes the Camps should be called. However, before she states that, she prefaces her opinion with the above words. It is possible that Mary is aware that some Nisei are against the use of the term concentration Camp. Recall the discussion of Bill's response to this question and it becomes evident that although they are both Nisei, they have differing views and opinions on how to remember the Camps. Despite these differences, the use of the collective voice is used throughout their interviews.

Now returning to Mary's prefacing of her response shown above, we see her express her desire to keep the collective voice in tact and perhaps an effort to remove any

political divisions about the Camp between those who favor the term "concentration Camp" over "Internment Camp." She alludes to the idea that she does not want to separate herself from others and that she will express her opinion, but at the same time, it is not a battle she wants to cause division over. In choosing not to focus on the disagreement or engage in a dialogue about the terminology, Mary also allows for the larger context of the Incarceration to remain untouched.

For example, an argument for or against the use of a particular term may involve a discussion about the structural, institutionalized inequalities that exist or existed. The emphasis on the experience of the "us" and "we" could possibly reflect the value of American Individualism and Privatized Patriotism (Biesecker, 2002). The trauma the Nisei endured was not something that was made public and addressed in front of American society at large; rather, the family worked through their hardships as a family unit. This narrative of American Individualism would appear to follow with the Nisei's self-identity of American and provides a channel that they can speak through while maintaining their American identity. Through this strategy, individuals and families are expected to fix themselves and cope through personal acts, such as resolving problems within the family. Rather than a collective mindset, a framework of individuality is privileged. The individual is expected to work through their challenges rather than look to the larger society to solve their problems. Mary's efforts to maintain the peace within the "us" and "we" that she describes is representative of an attempt for her personal problems to remain personal rather than political. Instead of engaging with the tension between the terms "concentration" and "Internment," Mary prefers to minimize the division because focusing on the terminology links the debate to larger ideological and

political discourses that call attention to, rather than suppress, the unequal structural power dynamics.

The acts of both willful forgetting and disassociated forgetting that were identified in this chapter have demonstrated how forgetting occurs across various dimensions such as selective remembering, (re)framing, and language.

In some ways, talking about the injustice of Camps becomes somewhat neutralized when it is told through another's experience. So, in addition to distancing themselves from the negative claims against the Camps, the Nisei also employ the strategy of forgetting in order to reframe the experience in a way that is compatible with the American life they have created. It is through the nullification, neutralization, and inclusion of positive memories that the Nisei are able to maintain their identity as Americans. Through these processes, the memories of the Camp experience become centered on a story of survival and perseverance rather than one of ethnic discrimination and civil rights violations. Through the process of the interviews, the memories of the Camp become depoliticized. The interaction between memory and the Nisei's efforts to conform to the identity of a "good American" allow the Japanese ethnicity to become depoliticized as well. Through the myths and narratives told by the speakers, citizenship becomes defined not by ethnicity but by civic behavior. Here, Biesecker's (2002) conception of privatized patriotism is evident in the idea that citizenship can be established and perpetuated through private acts such as living the "American Dream" and through the desire to cope privately through perseverance and hard work.

As this chapter has shown, the individuals interviewed were all Nisei, yet their Nisei identities were not singular. Instead, each Nisei had multiple identities that were

informed by the life choices they made and the life paths they chose. Their identities were not static and were/are linked to their subject position in the United States in the postwar era. In working through how the Nisei reconcile their Camp experience and trauma with the stories of their family's survival, it seems that the Nisei are exhibiting agency in the construction of their identity. For example, in their accounts about a seemingly traumatic experience, the trauma can be reversed through stories of the family's success. Instead of focusing on the trauma and constructing a family identity based on their trauma, they make the family's perseverance and success central.

However, as Sen (2007) concludes, the individual cannot have complete control over how they are viewed by others or what identity others see. For the Nisei, this is relevant because although they see themselves as Fathers, Mothers, Professionals, Activists, Volunteers, Japanese, American, and countless other identities, there may be a lingering force that encourages the Nisei to maintain the American aspects of their identity. Through purposeful acts of forgetting, the Nisei are able to reconceive of the Camp experience in a way that fits their present needs.

However, this chapter has also pointed to other dimensions of forgetting such as unconscious forgetting. This form of forgetting occurs through silence, a silence that can both represent the presence of trauma as well as the accommodation of the American identity that has become crucial to the memory process. Through the interaction of memory and identity, we can see how Camp memories become depoliticized through the inevitable co-constitutive nature of memory and identity.

Here, the singular conclusion that my relatives are purposefully forgetting requires a broadening of what forgetting is, means, and why it occurs. This however, is

not meant to suggest that the position and identities of individuals do not influence how they remember and forget. In remembering to forget, the Nisei are able to construct a memory of the Camp experience that both fits their identities as Japanese Americans by reinforcing their identity as an American, as well as reaffirming the collective Japanese American identity that is intertwined with the Camp experience.

CHAPTER 5

LOCATING MYSELF AS THE RESEARCHER

Knowing the complexities of the Nisei identity and the way that the memory process allows them to navigate that identity raises important questions about the legitimization of voice. Does being a survivor and being present for an experience legitimize one's voice? The influences of the individual's own position, as well as the power of the collective to affect what memories are allowed or disallowed, requires those who study the testimony of survivors to be diligently aware of the complexities of memory and the intricacies of human experience and needs that culminate into the memories that are shared (or not shared). Just as the researcher must be aware of the subject position of those they speak with and the multiple dimensions of forgetting, the researcher's own role in the outcome of their research must also be noted. As the researcher in this study, I affected the outcome both through my actions, as well as by my approach to the topic, all of which were influenced by my own identity and beliefs.

As the researcher in this study, I found myself occupying multiple roles and identities at different times throughout the process. Throughout this study, I have shifted between the positions of family member, engaged researcher as coperformative witness, reflective researcher post data collection, graduate student, and Japanese American, among others. I have learned that these identities, while disparate, were often overlapping. I moved in and out of these identities, at times, occupying the space

between multiple identities. My identities have affected my research from its inception because they have influenced my subject position as a researcher. In order to fully understand the meaning that was made and the knowledge that emerged from this study, the ways in which my own presence may have influenced the oral history interview process must be discussed.

The focus of this chapter is on how approaching the oral history interview as performance opens more possibilities that allow for a multilayered approach to understanding meaning making. For this chapter, I will return to the discussion of the practice of oral histories as performance. In order to fully explore the ways that my own position as the researcher affected the meaning that was made during the oral history interviews, we must again consider Critical Performance Scholar Dwight Conquergood's (1991) assertion that to privilege words over other ways of knowing would be "a great mistake" (p. 189). Following Conquergood (1991) and Turner (1986), communication research can move away from a purely text-positivism approach and embrace the idea that meanings are communicated through alternative mediums. This approach however, does not devalue words or text; instead, it allows for and recognizes the nuances that emerge in the interplay between the spoken word and performed actions.

Returning to the discussion of oral history interviews as performance, we must ground this analysis chapter in the understanding that oral histories, more than a record of an historical event, are embodied performances where telling is transformed into doing, where by telling, meaning is being made. Due to the meaning-making process inherent in oral history interviews, the performance of oral history acquires significance through its co performance with the researcher, which makes the process of oral history interviews a

collaborative, dialogic experience. In this sense, the oral history interview is a memory space where acts of remembering and forgetting become an interactive process.

The analysis in this chapter is based on the theoretical framework of oral history interviews as performance and my own position as a coperformative witness throughout the interview. Through understanding oral history as performance, we can begin to see how memories are negotiated and performed, thus highlighting the complexity of memory. In order to further explore these concepts, I will focus on the tension between spoken words and embodied communication, as well as my own position as both insider and outsider.

Using performance as a way to understand culture or people is not intended to produce a single Truth; instead, it is an analytical tool that allows for a more complex understanding of oral history performance than other frameworks. Specifically, the recognition of the value of both the spoken word and embodied actions allow us to begin peeling away layers of meaning in order to get closer to the real. One way to do this is through attention to the ways in which subjects communicate and transmit knowledge and meaning through the use of their bodies rather than purely words. Sitting at her kitchen table in her home in Castro Valley, the following conversation took place between myself and Aiko Oshima:

> LK: Is there anything else you remember that you want to add?
> AO: If I hadn't gone to Camp
> and living among my own race
> I'm
> I'm better for it
> knowing that
> growing up
> AS an American
> AND of another nationality,
> it places one in a very unique situation

(tears begin to form in her eyes)
and
to realize
how fortunate
that my parents did
come here
TO America
to start a new life

Looking at *what* is said by Aiko, it would appear as if she felt gratitude towards the Camp and that the experience enhanced her life. While I do feel she was sincere in her statements, the tears that began to form in her eyes cannot be left unexamined for these tears provide additional possibilities as to the meaning of Aiko's words. For example, it shows that she has an emotional reaction to thinking about her nationality. While it is unclear whether the tears are sadness, anger, or another emotion, the tears could be representative of a larger narrative of negotiation and struggle that Aiko faces as a Japanese American who lived through the Incarceration period, yet is an American. This complexity was elaborated on in Chapters 2 and 3.

Regardless as to the meaning of Aiko's tears, their presence demonstrates how the human subject is a multidimensional, complicated individual that exists within a specific context. Her tear-filled eyes indicate that perhaps there is more to the meaning of what is being verbally communicated than meets the eye. While Aiko is not speaking ill of her Camp experience, the emotions she expresses and communicates to me make me feel as if there is more to the story. Seeing the tears well up in her eyes speaks to what Ethnographer Soyini Madison (2010) referred to as affectual ways of knowing. The tears and the significance of these tears is not known, but it reveals a complexity and adds additional layers to the meaning of Aiko's experience. Rather than taking the words at face value, the possibilities for additional meanings are created. Despite the contextual or

historical constraints Aiko may be operating under, the visual cues and her embodiment of feeling that were not expressed verbally highlight her agency as an individual. From this, the oral history account must be understood as something that is constructed by the performers rather than an objective account of history. That is, the accounts and stories they share are the result of a memory process that is affected by their subject position and social context.

In addition to the idea that all individuals have agency within various frameworks, each person I spoke with was seen as subjects rather than objects. Rather than an object to be consumed by the researcher or reader's gaze, the individuals were subjects who gazed back at me and were active agents in the telling of their own reality. It is in this ability for the subjects to reverse the gaze onto the researcher that both the subject and the researcher become interlocutors. This interactive and collaborative research process stands in stark contrast to the "view from above" research originally practiced in ethnographic research. As the "view from the above" evolved into an "on the ground" approach and the practice of coperformative witnessing replaced participant observation, a simple act such as laughter becomes not just a field note; instead, it becomes an act that both holds meaning and opens possibilities for meaning. Through coperformative witnessing, a simple act such as subjects looking at each other and sharing laughter could be the closest that there is to understanding. It is this acceptance that as a researcher, I may not truly every really understand, but that through understanding oral histories as performance and valuing the words equally as those communicative acts that cannot be translated into words, I can begin to at least imagine the possibilities of what is happening.

Through the process of the interviews, the insider/outsider position was brought to light through my position as a coperformative witness rather than a researcher who is doing research on a subject. The collaborative and joint nature of coperformative researcher comes through in two aspects of the interview process: First, my relatives often asked me questions or asked for copies of photographs and documents I brought. Conversely, I received photographs and documents from them. It was not a knower and known relationship; instead, we occupied shifting roles at various Moments with both myself and the speaker moving in and out of the role of the knower. Second, embodied actions such as laughter represented the collaborative nature of the interview process by offering insight into how meaning and understanding is created through the interactions of the participants.

In unpacking how I was positioned as a coperformative witness rather than a researcher doing research on a subject, the oral history interviews can reveal the many ways in which the researcher and research subject do not exist on a fixed plane. Throughout the oral history interviews with my relatives, there was a mutual exchange of information and knowledge. Rather than being positioned as a researcher whose sole intention was to collect data from subjects, I felt like I was part of a dialogue where at times positions shifted and I was the one providing answers and information. For example, I brought a binder of photographs to each of my interviews. In my interview with Mary Freeman, she found a photograph of her brother, Bill Kashiwase, that she wanted to photocopy. She asked me if it was okay if her husband, Amos, made a copy of the photo, and I, of course, happily agreed. Although a small gesture, this instance made me feel like I was contributing to the interview process and that I was able to give

something back to Mary, who was sharing so much with me. Additionally, take for example my interview with Denny Fujita. He tells me about a photograph of Nancy, his older sister, and a young boy. The caption reads "Little Americans with Japanese faces." I told him I had emailed with Nancy and tried searching TIME magazine online but did not have any luck finding the photograph. The following exchange ensued:

> DF: So Nancy was pretty sure it was TIME magazine?
> LK: Yeah she said Time and I did google images but couldn't find anything
> well I'll email you
> the photograph
> DF: Did Nancy remember who the young boy was?
> LK: Yes
> I'll try to look when I get home I can go to my emails and find it.
> yeah she remembered the boy's name it was with

In this portion of the interview, Denny and I are gathering information from one another. I ask him about the photograph and he asks me about the boy's name. Just as he is offering me information, I also am able to provide him with information. Also significant is the collaboration that can be seen occurring in this exchange with Denny. We are working together to locate the TIME magazine with the photograph of his sister Nancy. In this Moment, we both become coresearchers in the interview. From the shifting roles of researcher and researched subject that occurred in the oral history interviews with my relatives, it seems that the interview process was not just about finding answers to my questions; rather, it is an open process that is heavily influenced by my own actions as well as those of my relatives.

The oral history interviews as a performance provide additional insight into the ways that meaning and understanding produced in the interview process are shaped by the performance of the performers. In particular, the establishment of understanding through embodied acts such as laughter appeared in several of the interviews. As I sat

listening to Uncle Bill tell me about his experience in the Incarceration Camps, I made note of times when he would laugh. I remember writing down that he laughed about a phrase or chuckled after he said something, but I also remember that it felt uncomfortable writing down "laughs" or "chuckles" because even though the sound coming from his body would be labeled as laughter, there was a feeling that laughter was not the correct word. The best way I can describe the relationship between the emotional tone and the act of the laughing is to compare it to events such as Moments of silence where an individual feels out of their element, or is unsure how to behave in the situation and begins giggling. In that Moment, the affectual ways of knowing indicate that the person is not giggling because something is funny; rather, there are other explanations as to the laughter. Despite my hesitation, I made a note of the "laughter" I witnessed. If the transcription of my interview with my Bill Kashiwase was read at face value by someone with little knowledge about the history of Japanese Americans or their wartime experience, they may interpret his laughter as a sincere, jovial laughter. In the same respect, if someone without a personal or familial connection to the Japanese American experience were conducting the interview, Bill's laughter may be recorded in the transcript and researcher's own work as sincere laughter and happiness. If oral histories are approached as archival records that provide an objective historical record, the following is what we might see:

> LK: What should we call the Camps?
> BK: I don't know
> I guess Internment Camp is best
> that way it doesn't sound like we had to go *(laughing)*
> LK: Yeah Internment Camp makes it feel like less of a prison. Did it feel like a prison?
> BK: it didn't feel like being in prison
> but you knew you were in prison

(he laughs)

The laughter, as it is presented, can be understood or explained in a number of different ways. With the translation of the human subject into text, the researcher, and even the reader, can infer the meaning Bill is attempting to convey based on their interpretation of the situation and context. Perhaps he is laughing and joking about making the Camps sound neutral because the Camp experience is funny to him. Perhaps he laughs about knowing he was in prison because the analogy between prison and Camp is an outrageous analogy. While I believe that the words of the subject should be open and free for interpretation rather than closed and definitive, I also believe that ethnographers, particularly Cole (2010) and Madison (2010), would also argue for the contextualization of the spoken words and the presentation of the performative aspects of the interview. In contrast to the transcription of the interview above, Madison's (2010) calls for poetic verse, which was followed throughout this study. Poetic verse would allow the reader to hear, in the speaker's own words, and may be presented more effectively in the following manner:

> BK: *(he pauses, as if he is trying to decide what to say)*
> *(looks at me and speaks assuredly)*
> I guess "Internment Camp" is best
> that way it doesn't sound like we HAD to go
> *(breaks eye contact and laughs as if to recognize the irony of his statement)*
> LK: (*slightly uncomfortable with the laughter)*
> yeah Internment Camp makes it feel like less of a prison....
> Did it feel like a prison?
> BK: It didn't feel like being in prison
> BUT you KNEW you were in prison
> *(he laughs, almost as if he is thinking about this statement more in his head)*

If the *how* takes precedence over the *what* in oral history interviews, the emphasis Bill places on certain words and the added information provided in parenthesis by the

researcher complicates the oral history interview as objective historical record. Providing the transcription format in prose and including the emphases and my own interpretation of the speaker's feelings accomplishes one of the major outcomes in performance studies: situated layered meanings. The layered meanings emerge from a combination of context, history, and bodily experiences.

In understanding the complexities of my interview with Bill Kashiwase, it is important to recognize the history and experience of Japanese Americans since the end of the Camps. In the years following WWII, Japanese Americans aimed to be accepted as Americans and prove their loyalty to the United States. It was not until the 1980s that the Sonsei (3rd generation) began fighting for redress about the injustice suffered by their parents and Grandparents. The redress movement was a point of contention within the Japanese American community because the Nisei (2nd generation) had lived the postwar years trying to assimilate and be seen as Americans. Despite achieving redress in 1988, the Incarceration of Japanese Americans is not often spoken about within my family. While I may feel resentment about the Camps, those in older generations have diverging opinions about the Camps and how they should be remembered. For example, Bill's laughter after stating that the Camps should be called "Internment Camps" is not laughter because he is reminded of a funny joke or a pleasant memory. His laughter is not present because he finds his statement to be funny; perhaps his laughter emerges as recognition of the irony in his statement. Although at first I experienced slight hesitation in making this assertion because I cannot claim to know how the other person feels, I can propose this possibility because as a coperformative witness who is participating in the meaning of that laughter, there are feelings that are communicated and translated to me that cannot

be said through words; they are felt in the Moment and in the relationship dynamic.

Although the words spoken by Bill in the verses above do not necessarily depict a vivid experience or emotion, there is still much meaning in the performance of the oral history interview. In the oral history interview with Bill, the archive and the repertoire interact in a way that complicates the meaning that can be uncovered. While Bill states that the Camps should be called "Internment Camps," his nonverbal communication and laughter show that this statement is more complex. Then, when placing this statement in the broader context of the Nisei's effort to appear 100% American and maintain their role as a model citizen, as discussed in Chapter 4, Bill's statement is multi-dimensional and provides the possibility that he has a complicated relationship with his Camp experience that perhaps he has not completely come to terms with himself. Perhaps he is still working through thoughts and feelings about the Camp, which materialize through his actions. If this is accepted, the oral history performance for Bill is a space for him to create his interiority and make and remake it throughout our interactions. The inherent tension between his spoken words and embodied actions parallels the tension that is present in his attempt to reconcile his identity and memories of his Camp experience.

While Bill's laughter demonstrates the ways that laughter can complicate the meaning found in oral histories, laughter also serves to highlight the subject-subject relationship between the researcher and the speaker. Consider the following exchange between myself and Aiko Oshima:

> LK: Do you remember anything about the barbed wire and the fences at Camps? I've seen pictures…
> AO: We were surrounded by barbed wire and sentries
> with rifles
> and uh as youngsters,
> uh our parents told us not to go near the area you know

where the outposts were,
but as kids,
(smiles and laughs)
we of course would ignore our parents

In this exchange, Aiko Oshima's laughter reminds me that she is not just a vessel from which I am attempting to extract information; rather, she is a person who is sharing her story with me and is an active agent in the transmission of knowledge. In the instance above, her laughter stems not specifically from her Camp experience. Instead, the laughter is reminiscent of her relationship with her parents and the tense, yet loving relationship dynamics between a defiant, curious child and their parents. As the researcher, it is far too easy to see the person being interviewed as holding a single identity, but when Aiko Oshima laughed about ignoring her parents' wishes, I was reminded her life is not solely the product of her Camp experience. In the Moment, she was exercising her agency and reminding me, the researcher, that she is not the embodiment of an experience that can be fully known; rather, she is an individual that has many life experiences that interact and create layered, and often contradictory, meanings.

Laughter again adds another dimension to viewing oral histories as performance when we take a closer look at the researcher's own role in the oral history process. In particular, the Moments where the speaker and I laugh together are important Moments that represent the dialogic nature of understanding and meaning making through a performance lens. The following exchange occurred during my interview with Bill Kashiwase:

LK: when you went to Colorado was it much different than the assembly center in Merced?
BK: That place…
all fenced in TOO
with guard towers all around

(rate of speech increases)
I don't know whether it was guarding us or guarding the public out
(we both laugh)

This shared laughter made me feel like I understood. It made me feel like regardless of *what* was being said, I understood the interiority of Bill and *how* he was saying *what* he was saying. I'm not sure what made me laugh, but there was a feeling in the Moment that I knew it was acceptable, and perhaps even expected that I laugh. There was a shared understanding between Bill and myself that signaled to me that *we* understood the meaning of what he was saying, a meaning that *they* (outsiders, others) would not be able to grasp. Shared laughter, while able to be written in a transcription, also transmits knowledge about *how* Bill feels about his Incarceration experience and the irony that we both found in his statement. In the Moment that we both laughed, I was able to understand with and through Bill's embodied actions and nonverbal communication, something that the archive cannot contain or transmit. However, this joint laughter that I experienced also raised questions about my role as the researcher. Did I laugh first? Did he laugh first and I joined? Did we laugh simultaneously? Is it possible for two people to laugh at the exact same time?

As I think back to the interviews and review the audio, I realize that my own subject position affected the information I received and needs to be acknowledged in the process of understanding the layered meanings that emerged from my oral history interviews. My relationship to those I interviewed and my knowledge about them personally, as well as their familiarity with me, was more prevalent in certain parts of the oral history performance than others. In particular, my position as an "insider" both in the sense of being a family member and being Japanese, was reflected in the story and

narration told about my family that was repeated throughout the interviews in different ways. Moses Oshima, in communicating his experience, relied heavily on depictions of the Kashiwase and Oshima family that relayed a message to me about the perseverance and success of my own family.

> *(slight upward inflection)*
> BUT on the whole!,
> we came through fairly well.
> EJ and Miye *(my grandparents)* were able to
> buy that nice house up at Montclair
> and the neighbors
> none of the
> if I remember correctly
> David (*my Dad)* went to school up Skyline or some place
> and he did REAL well
> and the people treated the Nisei and his generation pretty well
> You were able to go to school and
> not have a lot of BITTERNESS against your father and mother
> *(pause)*
> Yeah that was very nice ESPECIALLY
> when you look back
> at how the Kashiwase and the Oshima family got along
> WELL, you just survived.

Here, Jackson (2005), Stewart (1996), and Madison's (2010) notion of layered meanings is crucial to understanding the story being presented. Embedded within the story of the Japanese American Incarceration are stories about the strength and perseverance of the Japanese community, as well as stories particular to individual families. The Incarceration experience was not just about the time in the Camp; rather, it is about a larger narrative that gets constructed, performed, and sustained in the following years. It is a story that is meant to be transmitted to later generations; it is Moses' opportunity to make history. As the researcher *and* as his great niece, I am a coparticipant in the creation of history as he determines it. Through my subject position as his family

member, he is simultaneously creating a historical statement and directly shaping the way the Kashiwase/Oshima family will be remembered by future generations.

However, self-implication in the oral history interviews extended to the realm of coperformative witnessing as well. As the researcher, my presence contributed to the transmission and production of knowledge. In my interview with Aiko Oshima, I was directly implicated *by* Aiko Oshima in her narrative.

> LK: Do you remember where you lived?
> AO: Can you picture a LOOONG
> …barracks.
> long barracks
> and then these barracks-
> say from this end of this kitchen here to the end of the house there.
> ok?
> we were in barracks,
> long barracks.
> *(stands up, shuffles to the nearby kitchen counter, and grabs pencil)*
> oh let me draw you a picture ok?
> here's a long barrack ok?
> this is one end here and another end here and they were broken up into apartments
> and the doors were here ok?
> there were so many apartments broken up into the barracks

By including me in her story through asking for my participation and response to her story, I am being implicated as a witness and coperformer. When Aiko Oshima asks me a question and I respond, my response and her question together make knowledge. While these are Moments where I am actively coperforming and making history with my relatives and I am reminded of my status as an insider and family member, there are also Moments that remind me that I am not an insider or an outsider; a knower or the known; I am both/and, not either/or.

When the oral interview process first began, I felt that my position as part of the family of those interviewed provided me with a certain ability to understand in a way that

other researchers who were "outsiders" would never be able to grasp. I thought I would be able to best express the values, beliefs, and voices of my relatives in regards to their Camp experience. The following section of transcription serves to complicate how I position myself as the researcher:

> LK: And they had guns too?
> BK: OH YEAH
> sure
> they shot
> they shoot those things
> *(he laughs)*
> *LK*: Did they shoot them a lot?
> BK: No
> *(stated as if I should know the answer)*
> they didn't shoot.
> *(Speaking very matter of factly)*
> I didn't hear 'em

In the first section, Bill's laughter was perhaps an indicator that what he said was not true, but given my follow up question, it is clear that I did not understand that. When he responded to my question with "no," I immediately experienced a feeling of un-belonging. Throughout the oral history process, I had felt like an insider with special knowledge about the historical and personal context that each person operated under; however, in the above instance, I was oblivious to what Bill was communicating. I had missed his sarcasm, or perhaps, I had just misread his tone. Either way, this Moment reminded me that even though I feel like an insider, I will never really completely understand what my relatives experienced in Camp. I will never have that experience myself. It is in this realization that I am reminded that my own preconceptions about how the Incarceration Camps should be remembered and what should be remembered cannot be privileged over the narration of my relatives. My own subject position confronted me and made me aware that I cannot fully understand their experience, and

because of that, I cannot make judgments about how they choose to remember or conduct their lives. This raises important questions about the role of the ethnographer and the critic.

Throughout the interview process, my mere presence in addition to my actions, influenced the outcomes. It is crucial that I am aware of how my own position as the researcher and as a family member of the Yonsei generation affected the knowledge and meaning that was coproduced through the oral history interviews. With this understanding, it becomes increasingly critical for the researcher to be conscious of their own position and the way in which our own positions, as well as those positions in relations to those we work with, have the potential to both limit and expand the possibilities of what can be. Looking at my own position in this study, it becomes clear that my position as a relative had the potential to affect what my family members chose to share with me. Perhaps a researcher who was not a family member would have heard different stories than me. Similarly, a researcher who was not of Japanese Ancestry may not have asked the questions I asked or understood the subtext in the same way I did. By looking at the ways that my position as the researcher influenced the outcome of the oral history interviews, it becomes clearer that in conducting research I, as the researcher, must be cautious in asserting definite answers or conclusions. If I, as the researcher, do not account for the ways that I limited or closed off other realities from emerging in the interview, I am closing off further discussion and exploration.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

I began this project with a story about an experience I had in an undergraduate class where my sense of belonging was severely shaken. Originally, I wrote, "I was asked to move to a table where I belonged. I was asked to move from a table where I did not belong." These statements when I first wrote them were facts, but now after completing this project, I realize that I never questioned what made me think I belonged in the first place. The way I saw myself was clearly as an American—just like any White person in that class would likely identify. My life and the material manifestations of my identity were reflective of an American, yet in that class, I was told I was not American in the same way White people were American. I knew this bothered me because I felt that someone else was telling me who I was and where I belonged. I wrote: "…I was somehow blindsided by the recognition that others saw me as different in some way" (p. 4). While at the time I understood that my strong reaction to this event was influenced by the way my ethnicity became central to my identity, I have now been able to make sense of my experience further through the experience of my relatives.

As I learned through this process, my Nisei relatives constructed their lives to reflect the identity of a typical American, yet when Executive Order 9066 was signed, the only part of their identity that was recognized was their visibility as someone of Japanese ancestry. Through my analysis of their experience, I was able to better make sense of my

own. Using Sen's (2007) discussion of the multiplicity of identity, I came to better understand how viewing others as embodying a single identity is problematic both on a societal and individual level. Through Sen's (2007) discussion of identity, I understand how I can see myself in a certain way, but others also have the ability to impose an identity on me or to only recognize one aspect of my identity. I saw this happen to my Nisei relatives when the government imposed and privileged their Japanese identity over their identity as an American or citizen disregarding their own self-identity. The imposition of their Japanese identity onto my relatives, who viewed themselves as Americans, had a lasting impact on them as I saw through my interviews and became apparent in my analysis. In a way, their identity and memories were reactionary. They used the memory process to reinforce their identity and the identity they reinforced was a reaction to the confusion surrounding their identity and an attempt to reinforce the identity they wanted others to accept them as.

Through making sense of the experience of my Nisei relatives and their identity development, I began to better understand my own complicated relationship with my identity. Despite the daily performance of an American, the visibility of my ethnic background can control the identity that is imposed on me by others. Because others are able to assign me an identity despite the multiple identities I posses, it affects my performance and outward expression of and understanding of who I am as a Japanese Chinese American. Consciously or subconsciously, I behave and act in certain ways in an attempt to have control over my self-identity and the identity others project onto me. As someone who does not fit the appearance of a typical American, the words I choose when I speak and whether or not I choose to speak become closely tied to issues of my

identity. Because I view myself as an American because I was born in the United States, I am also aware that the way I look causes others to see me as Japanese or Chinese or Asian. This knowledge leads to my management of my actions and words. For example, my indecisiveness about speaking up during my undergraduate course reflects my own internal process of determining how my actions would affect how others saw me or how my words would clash with the identity I constructed for myself. In the larger picture, this understanding makes me more equipped to understand the hesitance I felt about beginning this project. I now realize that my hesitance was about my inability to understand how I managed and was managing my own identity, much like my relatives were forced to do following the Camps and in their interviews.

Through exploring the ways that my relatives' identities influenced their memories during the oral history interviews, the parallel between their experience and my own that I identified in my introduction, has evolved. Originally, I saw a similarity between how I felt being asked to move tables and the way my relatives may have felt when they forced to go to the Incarceration Camps; however, that was the extent of my understanding of the parallel. This simplistic view our similarities has since expanded. When I first began analyzing my interviews with my relatives, I saw myself looking at their experience as something separate from my own. When I wrote about identity and memory, I approached it as the result of "their generation" and "back then." From the specifics of my relatives' interviews, I was able to see how my analysis shed light on the more general relationship between memory and identity, but it was not until I was forced to stop and really think about it that I realized their relationship to their identity is actually the same situation I find myself in as I write this thesis. We experienced the

same feeling of confusion and haziness around our identities despite the 60-year lapse in time.

In recent years, I have often been confronted with the declaration that it is "so weird" that I am Japanese AND Chinese. Similarly, I have found that since moving to Salt Lake City, I am repetitively asked where I am from. When I respond that I'm from California, I can tell that is not the type of answer the person was hoping for. Looking at me, some people do not see an American; this is the same position my relatives were in at the time of their Incarceration.

My identity consists of various roles I play throughout the day and it also consists of those more stable aspects of my self-concept; however, our identity is also formed in reaction to how others view us. That is, being Japanese and Chinese to me was a physical part of my identity. Culturally, I am American. Taking on a project that focused on Japanese Americans, especially my own family, was an interesting phenomena because I knew it would draw attention to my Japanese ancestry. I do not reject my Japanese identity; instead, I try to embrace it. I use the word "try" because as a Japanese Chinese American, claiming to be Japanese is not an easy task. I do not speak the language and I have never even stepped a foot in Japan, so how can I justify calling myself Japanese? Although these questions are ones that I personally face today, in looking at them and thinking back to what my relatives told me in their interviews, they must have asked themselves these same questions. As someone of another ethnicity who considers themselves American, I exist in a silent, sometimes invisible limbo. Surprisingly, this limbo is the same feeling of confusion that my relatives felt when they were identified as dangerous aliens and sent to Camps. We are not quite Japanese, but at

the same time, we are too Japanese to be seen as Americans. Living in multiple worlds, but not quite existing fully in either, is an experience that is not easily translated into words or easily expressed. Instead, it is an internal dialogue that plays out as I navigate through daily life.

When I first started writing, I could tell that I was aware that there was tension in my own identity and that I was attempting to make sense of it; however, these tensions seemed to be left relatively unexplored. I was not able to make sense of the multiplicity of my identity and the ways that I was affected by it because I did not have the language or frameworks to articulate my feelings. The confusion that I felt was not something that I had been taught how to manage; no one had explained what I was feeling or why, and more importantly, there was never a discussion about how to resolve the cloud of confusion I experienced in the years following being asked to move tables. This metaphorical cloud prevented me from being able to articulate my experience, and without articulation, it is nearly impossible to understand.

More than anything, this project has proven to me how identity can be confining and silencing. In the early stages of my process, I emailed several relatives to ask if I could interview them. One of my relatives politely declined and explained that her memories were not very clear and she preferred not to speak about her experience. A few days later, I received a follow-up email from that relative that elaborated on why she refused to be interviewed and explained that she still suffers from the wounds inflicted during the Incarceration. When I first received these emails, I felt disappointed that my relative did not want to be interviewed, but in a way her refusal gave me hope that I was onto something with my topic and that others would be able to articulate similar feelings.

However, as I look back at my intial reaction to her emails, I realize that I neglected an important aspect of her emails: her silence. After working through the reasons why and how forgetting occurred for my relatives in their interviews, I came to better understand what silence can mean. A motivating factor in completing these interviews was the fact that my family rarely spoke of their Camp experience. I did not know or understand what this silence meant, and in many ways, I wanted them to speak. I was not content with their silence and could not understand why they would be silent around the discrimination and injustice they endured. It sounds insensitive to say now, but at the time, I think I was angry that they remained silent.

In my own experience in my undegraduate class as well as my realtive's experience, I viewed silence as complacency. Even now, over 4 years after my experience, I am still affected by what happened and the fact that I moved to another table without speaking up for myself similar to the way that my relatives remained silent as they were sent to Camps. That silence that I viewed as complicitness and the absence of meaning, is actually riddled with significance. Looking back, my silence, as well as my relatives, was intertwined with a complicated realtionship to the different aspects of our identity. In the confusion of having an identity imposed on us and trying to sort out who we are, silence was the only option at the time. Through interviewing my relatives and working through the reasons for their silence in the 1940s and their silence in the years following the Camps, I was able to sympthize with their silence rather than judge it. The silence I experienced in my own situation, and the silence of my relatives in theirs, made me realize that there are stories within silence that can reveal more than words can.

These interviews and my own analysis do not change anything but they show that the confusion and sometimes silence that individuals living between multiple identities endure can be navigated and frameworks for working through the tension between identity and silence are available. There is potential to allow people to speak and to forge a path for those who, because of the complexity of their identity, have trouble finding the words to speak. We need to understand idenity to understand what allows us to remember, forget, or remain silent. Identity, as I have come to understand it, is multidimensional, complicated, and a process that is always open to change. I have been lucky because completing my interviews and analysis have allowed me to understand my silence and my uncertainty and the way that my identity as a Japanese Chinese American is ambiguous and requires navigation as I construct meaning about my experiences both past and present. Something that I could not make sense of or articulate when I started this project has become more clear to me. While these tensions may seem specific, they have larger implications about who is able to speak and who is silenced. Our identities and our memories can push us into silence because there is no established framework through which to speak. How do we negotiate our voice when we are in a constant negotiation with others who project identities onto us? How do we understand that those Moments when we feel confused or conflicted about speaking up does not mean that we are weak or incapable; it means that we do not have a tempate to follow or we are managing aspects of our identity that leave memories up for contestation.

As I began doing the analysis of the interviews, I started to see how fundamental identity is in memory, but also how crucial of a role it plays in our ability to make sense of what happens to us and around us. The way I first conceptualized the parallel between

my relatives and I is still significant, but I have also found that the parallel between my experience and my relatives has more to do with identity than a singular event. Our identity not only affects how we remember, but it also limits what we are allowed to publicly remember. Everyone has multiple identities, and for some, their identities are in tension. If identity informs memories and memories inform identity, what we remember tells us about who we are and who we are dictates much about what we remember. My memories of the Japanese American Incarceration are influenced by my identity as a Japanese American, yet simultaneously, my identity as an American complicates how I express my memories.

As I narrated my relatives' experience and began to reflect on my own, I realized that identity and memory are about constant movement. As I learned about my own identity and began to realize that understanding how our identity affects what we remember and forget as well as the stories we create for ourselves, I have realized that both are a constantly changing process. When I began writing, I wrote that I felt my own memories of the Incarceration were contradictory to my relatives' memories of their experience; however, after talking with my relative and completing my analysis of their memories, I no longer view our memories as being in conflict. Instead, I have expanded the ways that I can imagine the Incarceration experience, which opens alternative ways of understanding its meaning. My memories about the Japanese American Incarceration have become centered on my family and their own journey rather than one focused solely on a single event. Memory is a process, and through the completion of my writing process, I have learned that in order to be part of the process, I must not view this project

as "right" or "final"; rather, it is a point of entry into furthering my understanding of my family's experience and the ways that identity is fundamental to memory.

My relatives' experience and the analysis of their interviews provide one possibility of how memory, identity, and photographs all interact in the memory process. More specifically, this project offers one way to remember the experiences of those incarcerated. However, if I had interviewed my relatives on a different day, or even a different time of the day, the answers I received might be different. Or, if I had chosen different relatives who lived in other states, the information I received might deviate from what I heard in the interviews used for this study. As I hope reading my work has demonstrated, human experience is riddled with complexity, a complexity that renders absolute conclusions obsolete. The tentative assertions I have presented and the interviews you have gained access to are only one possibility among many. While this study has been grounded in the theoretical frameworks of memory and performance, the inherent nature of these two areas of study lend themselves to remaining vigilant to the fact that this study represents only one possible reality. That is, just because something was not said in the interviews I conducted, it does mean that alternative realities do not exist. The combination of my specific standpoint, my relatives' standpoints, the location, the place, and the time all intersected in a unique way that produced a particular outcome. At any given Moment, any of the aforementioned factors can shift, however slightly, and allow for a different, yet no less significant reality. There are still many things left unexplored and unsaid that are equally important as what is explored in my project.

Personally, this process allowed me to complicate my own identity, the identity of my relatives, and the Camp experience. I was able to imagine other ways of experiencing

the Camps, something that was not possible for me before. The value in this study may not lie in how many memories or how much information my relatives were able to share. The revelations this study has provided on the importance of what was shared, how it was shared, in the context it was shared, and the framework through which it was shared holds significance as we attempt to understand how memories of past, often traumatic events, are communicated and remembered by survivors.

By watching how my relatives constructed their memories about the Camp and the deliberate choices they made in relaying those memories to me, I have learned that the Nisei were not necessarily trying to communicate a historical account of the past; rather, they were navigating how to communicate the past to me within the confines of the complexities of the present. Everyday, I navigate how to communicate within the confines of my identity, but understanding the confusion associated with operating under these frameworks are often left unexplored and unarticulated. Memories are not only about what is remembered; they are also about how what is forgotten and what is remembered reinforce and are reinforced by identity.

APPENDIX A

IRB EXEMPTION

Laura Kashiwase <laura.kashiwase@gmail.com> 5/17/12

to John.Stillman

Mr. Stillman,

My name is Laura Kashiwase and I am writing you regarding my Masters thesis in the Department of Communication. My committee chair is Suhi Choi (communiation), and my committee members are Mary Strine (communication) and Wesley Sasaki-Uemura (history).

For my thesis, I am using personal family photographs from the Japanese Internment in both Utah and Colorado. In addition to the photos, I would like to incorporate interviews with family members who were in the camps. I would like to gather their memories surrounding the photographs, as well as their memories of their experience in the camps.

I plan on interviewing 3-5 family members who were interned during World War II. The people I would speak with are either present in the photos, took the photos, or are family members of those in the photos.

The nature of my thesis leads me to believe that I would be conducting oral histories and would not be required to go through IRB, but I would appreciate your evaluation as to the nature of my proposed project. Thank you for your time.

Respectfully,

Laura Kashiwase
M.A. Candidate, University of Utah
Instructor, Department of Communication
Laura.Kashiwase@gmail.com

John Stillman <John.Stillman@hsc.utah.edu> 5/17/12

to me

Ms. Kashiwase,
The activities you describe below do not meet the regulatory definition of human subject research. IRB approval is not required in this case. Best regards,
John

--
John Stillman
Director
Institutional Review Board
University of Utah

APPENDIX B

PHOTOGRAPHS USED IN INTERVIEWS

From Denny Auntie 1943

Ann + Denny

From Uncle Bill

From Uncle Bill

Uncle MO

From Uncle Bill

From Uncle Bill

From Uncle Bill

Nancy

From Denny

From Denny
Bill ? 5 Fujitas 9-43
Mary

Ann, Nancy, Denny

From Denny Annacle 2-44

From Uncle Bill G Grandpa Oshima

From Uncle Bill

Bill

G GMA Oshima

From Uncle Bill

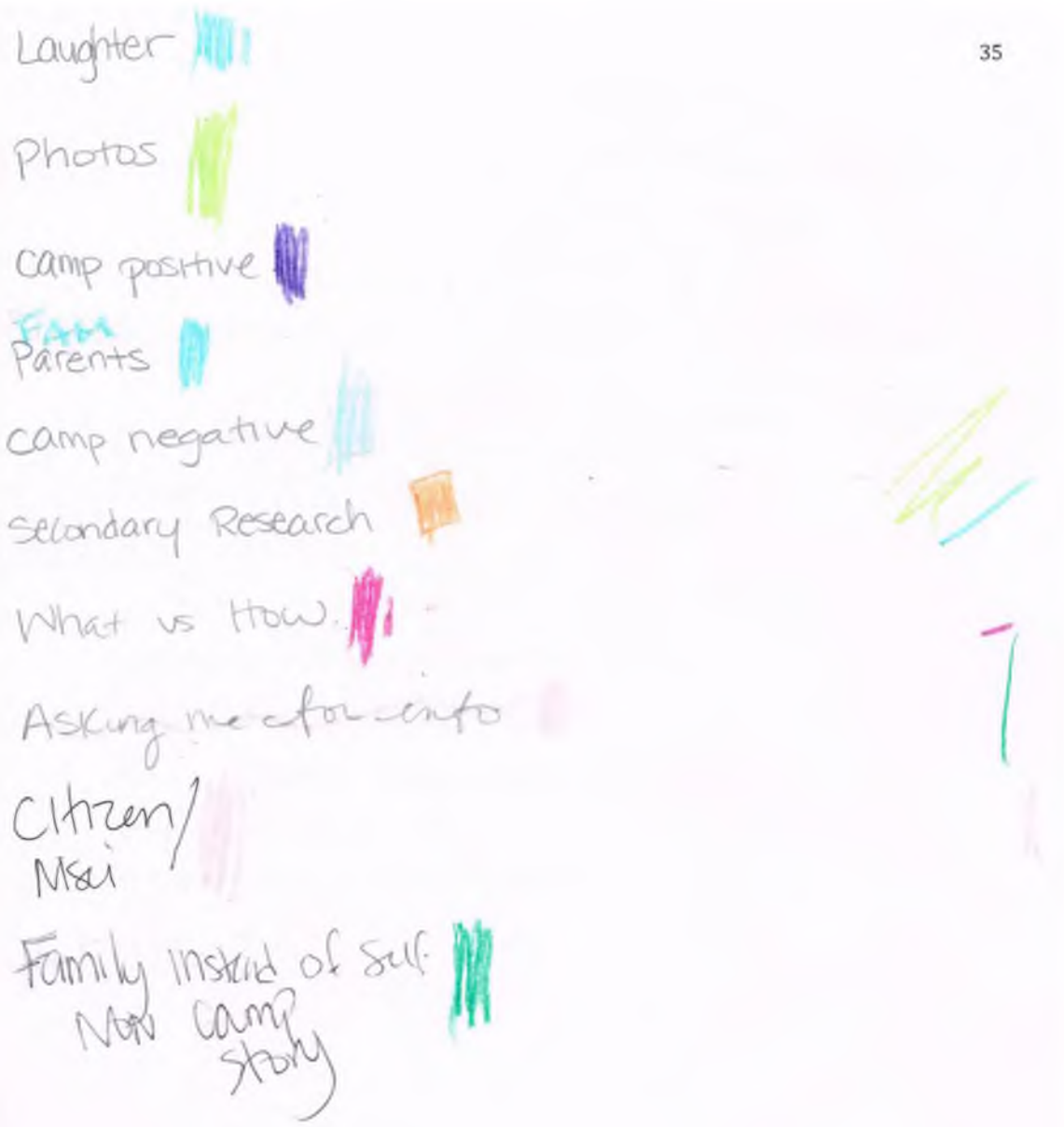
Kashiwase

APPENDIX C

PHOTOGRAPH OF MARY FREEMAN AND ME AFTER INTERVIEW

APPENDIX D

COLOR CODING USED IN DATA ANALYSIS


35
Laughter
Photos
camp positive
FAM
Parents
camp negative
Secondary Research
What vs How.
Asking me for info
Citizen/
Msi
Family instead of self
Non camp
story

APPENDIX E

SAMPLE RAW DATA WITH MY NOTES

MARY 22

For the no-no
Yeah it was a questionnaire
That people
Took
Its tricky questions
It wasn't mean to
I think they wanted to catch
And people were angry enough already as it was
It was just not
You know
(speaks louder) They didn't deserve to be in the camp we didn't do anything
It was enemy over THERE
Not here
And
No matter how much they tried they didn't
Weren't able to prove there was nay wrongdoing like
Planting
PLANTING crops
Certain direction or something or rather and and trying to make other people in like Hawaii
In oahu
Make it seem like they
They were
I think any of those plantation workers
Japanese from Japan
You know that they had some way in which they were helping the enemy
And I don't think even though they opened camps over there we didn't know about it
Even some of our friends didn't know
They had the detention camps there too
And some were sent to the mainland
Didn't even know that
I don't think they were allowed to talk about it or something
Why would they?
But I was one of those that was kind of
Really hurt
And it wasn't so much for me but
My parents
They did
And other parents
All of them sacrificed so much
And they had to put up with
I said its easier for us
We were born and we you know
Speak the language
And all that but THEY
They come from another culture and all this and they had to assimilate
And THEN
You know
(laughs)
mama go to the chickens you know and she
free range chickens
and then she would barter
because she could take the chicken, the eggs
and then you know go into town
and um
only papa could go to town was by wagon
you know
(laughs)

All I remember is I had to go through the next
What two years or whatever it was
And I said
Now why was I there two years?
Now that I think about it
1944
I graduated 1944
But I finished my freshman year that year in 1942
Well seems like I had three more years
Junior

Me: Sophomore

Sophomore, Junior , and then Senior
Yeah
And so
Both us were in the same grade
So 9th grade
And I thought it was just the reaction I got
Or I remember
And I felt it and thought oh
Gee you know
I mean it wasn't dumb, but
How could they be so gullible?
And I guess I spent my years
Feeling very bitter about the whole thing
And my mother couldn't
They had lots of different kinds of activities
They had for the people who
Whether it was activities for the sports
And
They had the
Bill was doing the FFA
Future farmers of America that was really good
It was good outlet for them
And then the farming
Thing to do and uh
Uh
And I don't know I missed him
But he had to go on with his life
And he was real happy where he was at
And he was able to earn
You know money
And I guess that Seabrooks farm is suppose to still be in existence
They're Japanese people
I don't whether they're in Seabrooks or just made their home around there or what
And um
I don't read all these Japanese
You know the news that doesn't make it to the big one like the Bee

Me: yeah
(Both laughing)

yeah
but that was uh
So I don't remember high school
I just remember I took Latin

was uh
you know
and knowing that being a citizen of this country
born and raised here
that it was wrong
you know for our government
to
to do so.

Thinking back now, pause i think pause my friends and I being youngsters, we thought, I don't think we really in our own minds realized what was going on in that sense. you know? mmhmmm but for me, the realization that i was the minority and to meet all these other Japanese and to be living with them and among them and getting to know them was something that I got to know within me.

Part 3 13:06
Well now as I look back
on the situation,
(pause)
and realizing
what had occurred
as
AS Americans
AS members of the Japanese race,
umm, i learned to think about my own nationality
according to my parents
and where they grew up
uh otherwise
if I hadn't gone to camp
and living among my own race,
I'm
I'm better for it
knowing that
growing up
AS an American
AND of another nationality,
it places one in a very unique situation
and
to realize
how fortunate
that my parents did
come here
TO America
to start a new life.

That and what I, we, the Japanese Americans had gone through, that did cross my mind at that time. and in my own mind, i say to myself that it wouldn't occur.

I think if…yes i know of how the people feel and uh i think the uh Japanese Americans um will be

DENNY

Oh I definitely see how dreary
And sparse
All the accommodations were
At the camp
And stories of blowing dust storms and sand getting through
Through all the cracks in the building which were poorly constructed
And the heat
And then miserable cold in the winters
And lack of insulation
Um
If I hadn't seen these pictures I would have thought that as a child I was well cared for
I was comfortable
I was happy
I was adequately fed
But it kinda brings you back to the reality that
Uh
I just wonder how well
The rest of the family was
My parents in particular how
How well they were being taken care of
They were sacrificing a lot just to shield us from the harshness of the conditions

Parents

(starts flipping through photos I brought)

Me: (Pointing to photo) Aunty Mary says she thought that was her but my dad thinks that was your mom

You know my first glance from the side view
From upside down
That is Joyce
But
No I think that is my Mother
Yeah that would make sense its my mother but
I don't many other pictures where she looks quite so
Uh
I'm not sure what to make of that photo
You have any other photos of her at the same period?

Me: I think that's the only one

I think I do
If I can get my hands on them
Some I've scanned
In the computer
Ok here's another one
(pulls out a photo)
this one has Nancy clutching Mother's skirt
(we both laugh at the photo)
(looking for other photos to try to figure out who woman in photo in question is)

Me: She does look different huh? Maybe her hair is just different.

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